AFRICA RECOVERY

United Nations Vol. 9 No. 4 December 1995

WORLD BANK TO BE MORE RESPONSIVE TO BORROWERS' CONCERNS

Growing threat to development aid for Africa

By **Christina Katsouris**
Washington, DC

Prospects for increased concessional aid to Africa remain dim despite the continent's growing need for this principal source of external support. In recent months, new agreements in multilateral funding arrangements signal a decline, or at best, a stagnation in Africa's access to soft loans for development.

Official development assistance (ODA) to sub-Saharan Africa is already down (in constant 1994 prices) from $16.7 bn in 1990 to $15 bn in 1994. The threat of a major cut in funding continues to hang over the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank facility that is the largest multilateral source of soft loans to Africa. And recently agreed concessional funding through the Lomé Convention in the 1996-2000 period shows no rise in real terms despite rising needs (see page 15). Contributions to the African Development Fund, the African Development Bank's soft-loan facility, could also fall by $700 mn (see page 3).

Africa's efforts to consolidate its economic and social gains are being undermined by the continuing decline in aid.

In view of these trends, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has called for renewed international backing for Africa's development efforts, reiterating concerns expressed by World Bank President James Wolfensohn and African delegates in early October at the World Bank/International Monetary Fund (IMF) annual meeting in Washington. In his first speech to the meeting, Mr. Wolfensohn said it is "bitterly ironic" that just as the world is reaching a consensus on how to address issues of equity, environment and other development challenges, "the threat to development assistance has never been greater."

The concessional funds at most immediate risk are those for the third and final year of IDA-10 (1993-95). Only a presidential veto can now reverse the late October decision by the US Congress to cut the final year US allocation to IDA-10 to $700 mn. This is just over half the amount promised by President Bill Clinton's administration in 1993.

"If (the) cuts materialize...overall donor contributions to IDA this coming 12 months could be reduced from $6 bn to under $3 bn," warned Mr. Wolfensohn. This is because current burden-sharing arrangements could lead to proportional cuts by other donors. He added that an adequate replenishment of IDA for the next three years would be "extraordinarily difficult if IDA-10 is reduced so drastically."

The only sources of comfort at an other-

turn to page 10

UNICEF calls for an "Anti-war Agenda"

Stresses need for protecting children during conflicts

By **Mark Thomas**

In an urgent and passionate call for global action, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is proposing an "Anti-war Agenda" to protect children imperiled by the ravages of war. The organization, set up in 1946 to bring emergency relief to the millions of child victims of World War II, estimates that over the last decade some 30 million children have been either killed, disabled, orphaned, left homeless or traumatized by war.

The harrowing impact of conflict on children and the action called for under the 10-point Anti-war Agenda (see box, page 8) — including a ban on child soldiers and on the use and sale of anti-personnel land mines — are the central themes of UNICEF's *The State of the World's Children 1996* report.

The report marks the 50th anniversary of UNICEF, which despite its current development mandate continues to bring assistance to large numbers of children caught up in emergencies related to war. In launching the report in London on 11 December, UNICEF Executive Director Carol Bellamy said the agenda "is not a grandiose scheme to bring peace in our time. But it is a vital starting point for lessening the toll of war on children."

The report also traces the development of UNICEF from its creation by the UN General

turn to page 8

Angola's road to recovery
page 22

North South Roundtable
page 6

Best copy available

AFRICA RECOVERY

United Nations
Vol. 9 No. 4 December 1995

Cover Story

Growing threat to development aid for Africa

ADB agrees to tougher donor conditions / 3

UNCTAD calls for flexibility on Naples debt relief / 11

Multilateral debt: the debate continues / 12

Also in this Issue

UNICEF calls for "Anti-war Agenda" / 1

Conflicts continue to wreak havoc / 4

North South Roundtable / 6

Africa-Asia: learning from the "Tigers" / 20

Conflicts, emergencies drain resources / 21

Reactivating development in LDCs / 30

GCA links economic, political reform / 31

Focus on women:

The Beijing Conference / 14

NGOs make themselves heard in Beijing / 16

The feminization of poverty assailed

Breadwinners of the world / 18

UNDP report highlights contribution of African women

Country focus

Angola on the road to recovery / 22

Donors pledge $993 mn in aid / 25

A crushing debt burden / 26

The role of oil and diamonds / 28

The legacy of land mines / 29

Departments

Agenda 33

Books 33

Baobab 32

Briefs 34

Watch 36

Africa Recovery is published in English and French by the Library and Publications Division of the United Nations Department of Public Information, with support from UNDP and UNICEF. Its contents do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations or the publication's supporting organizations. Material from this newsletter may be freely reproduced, with attribution.

Correspondence should be addressed to:
The Editor, Africa Recovery,
Room S-931, United Nations, New York 10017 USA
Tel: (212) 963-6857 Fax: (212) 963-4556 Fax/Modem: (212) 963-1193
e-mail: unafrica@undp.org

Subscribe to *Africa Recovery*

Annual subscriptions are available to individuals for $20 and to institutions for $35. Please send an international money order or make cheques payable in US dollars, drawn on a US bank, to the "Africa Recovery Trust Fund" and send to Circulation at the address shown above. For those who lack the means to pay the subscription fee, a limited number of complimentary subscriptions are available. Please send a clearly written application to the editor.

Editor-in-Chief
Salim Lone

Managing Editor
Mark Thomas

Deputy Editor
Nii K. Bentsi-Enchill

Staff Writer
Margaret A. Novicki

Editorial Assistant
Frehiwot Bekele

Production
Parvati McPheeters

Circulation
Alice Wairimu Kariuki

Africa Recovery is printed on recycled paper.

ADB agrees to tougher donor conditions

New President Omar Kabbaj pursuing plan for a "leaner and meaner" Bank

By **Patrick Smith**

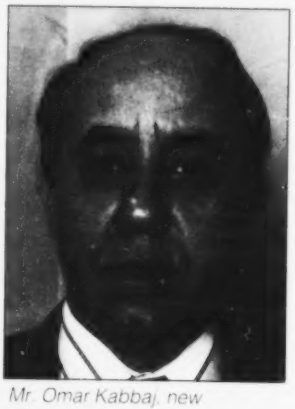
The African Development Bank (ADB) is rebuilding its image in Western markets after several years of administrative and political turmoil. Staff at the ADB's Abidjan headquarters credit much of the renewal effort to the organization's new president, Mr. Omar Kabbaj, a Moroccan, who is determinedly pursuing his plans for a "leaner and meaner Bank." He is also encouraging Western shareholders to take a bigger stake in the Bank, even if that means changing the delicate political balance between regional (African) and non-regional shareholders.

Expressing a personal opinion, Mr. Kabbaj said the Bank would benefit financially from increased non-regional participation: "The more we raise the share of industrialized countries in the Bank, the more leverage we give it on the financial markets," he told a 26 October press conference in Abidjan. In both the Asian Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, the shareholdings are split more or less equally between regionals and non-regionals. "I don't think if there was more non-regional capital in the Bank, (it) would lose its Africanness," Mr. Kabbaj argued. But this is disputed by several African shareholders, notably Nigeria — its finance minister, Mr. Anthony Ani, refers to increased Western shareholdings as "stealing the bank."

A reform agenda

Elected last August after two gruelling and divisive polls, Mr. Kabbaj has a full reform agenda. Less than a month after he took over, New York rating agency Standard & Poor's lowered its rating on the Bank's senior debt from "triple A" to "A double plus" because of what it called "politicization of the Bank." But Moody's, the other main rating agency, continued the ADB's triple A rating, while the smaller Fitch's agency also gave the Bank a triple A rating and offered a glowing commendation of Mr. Kabbaj: "The new president (elected in August with 63 per cent of the vote) appears to have even more support from both regional and non-regional (shareholders) than the election results would suggest."

On the two critical issues for the Bank group's future — the replenishment of the soft-loan African Development Fund and a capital increase for the Bank — Mr. Kabbaj has moved quickly and decisively to reach agreements. He has held a series of meetings with the Bank's governors outlining his reform programme. He also staged a mini-roadshow with Bank Treasurer James Ranaivoson, travelling to Bonn, Washington and London to let the US and European markets know of the policy and management changes in Abidjan.



Mr. Omar Kabbaj, new President of the African Development Bank.

Analysts are encouraged by capital market support for the Bank's two bond issues in October: a DM300 mn ($214 mn) issue in the Euro-Deutschemark market with Dresdner Bank and Salomon Brothers acting as joint book runners, and a $300 mn bond in the US market handled by Merrill Lynch. Although the Bank had not tested its standing in the US market for three years, a period in which its image was badly dented, the pricing of both bond issues was better than expected.

ADB operations over the past two years have been hard hit by much tighter restrictions on which countries can borrow on the Bank's quasi-commercial terms — only 13 African states are currently eligible. The other 39 states can borrow only from the soft-loan African Development Fund (ADF), which has been paralysed since January 1994 with donors refusing to make commitments to its replenishment until disputes over ADB lending policies and management practices are resolved.

Drop in soft-loan funding

But after a meeting with the ADB's executive board in late October, donors said they are willing to replenish the fund early next year — subject to progress on an internal audit of the Bank and an agreed reform programme. The ADF's seventh replenishment (ADF-7), which officials hope will be in place by March 1996, will be worth no more than $2.5 bn over the next three years, donor sources said. Mooted contributions to ADF-7 are almost a third lower than the previous replenishment of $3.2 bn pledged for the 1991-93 period of ADF-6.

The replenishment is also likely to occur in two or three tranches with their release conditioned on ADB management adhering to the new agreed policy procedures. Most of these procedures are based on a report by former World Bank Vice President David Knox's task force. This called for much tighter monitoring of loan appraisals, approvals and project implementation. The other targets of the Knox report were the Bank's sprawling bureaucracy (about 1,200 staff members in Abidjan, of whom just over half are professionals) and a management structure that failed to delineate a clear division of labour between the executive board and the Bank president.

Donors downplay the overall size of the soft-loan fund: "The important point," one donor said, "is that we uphold the principle of multilateral development financing in Africa and show that it can be used effectively." Even at the lower funding level, donors warn that difficulties remain in "building a consensus for the Fund."

The US Congress, for example, has made no allocations for the ADF next year, although Washington's contribution is regarded as a yardstick by other Western countries. Congress already has proposed cutting US bilateral aid to Africa by a third and support for the World Bank's soft-loan International Development Association by about 50 per cent (see page 1).

However, US officials say there is a possibility of an "extraordinary appropriation" for the ADF next year if the Bank's management "meets the reform conditions." Other donors have suggested quietly that the US would be cut out of the lucrative procurement contracts linked to ADF-aided projects if Washington does not participate in the replenishment.

Japan and France, the other key donors, are both committed to the replenishment (France initially supported maintaining the real value of the ADF), but they are not prepared to fill the gap left if Washington does not participate fully. ■

Conflicts continue to wreak havoc

Rwanda, Burundi still volatile; peace comes to Liberia, but eludes Sierra Leone

RWANDA

With the refugee crisis and cross-border clashes straining relations between Central African neighbours, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali warned in late December of a "crisis of confidence" in Rwanda — that refugees were afraid to return home. But the Rwandan government pointed out that the perpetrators of last year's genocide were afraid to return to justice and were also intimidating innocent refugees and preventing their return.

Rwanda and the UN Security Council agreed on 12 December to a final three-month extension of the mandate of the UN Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR). Rwanda had earlier rejected the extension of UNAMIR beyond the 8 December expiry of its mandate, arguing that it had a greater need for recovery and development aid. Negotiations in the Security Council scaled down the UNAMIR contingent to 1,200 troops and 200 military observers from the previous levels of 1,800 and 300. The UN will also look into the eventual transfer to Rwanda of UNAMIR's "non-lethal" equipment.

The continued presence of UN peace-keepers was among the confidence-building and security measures agreed on by the leaders of Rwanda, Burundi, Zaire and Uganda, and a Tanzanian representative at a Great Lakes summit convened by ex-US President Jimmy Carter in Cairo on 28-29 November.

The leaders adopted a plan to help speed the safe and voluntary return of nearly two million Rwandan refugees. This was expected to generate a rate of return of 10,000 a day "within a short time." After Zaire deported some 13,000 Rwandan refugees in August, with another 173,000, many from Burundi, fleeing the country in panic, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) averted a new crisis by dissuading Zaire from imposing a 31 December deadline for the departure of another 800,000 refugees. UNHCR relaunched its own voluntary repatriation programme, issuing a $288 mn appeal in late December to aid the repatriation in 1996 of 820,000 Rwandans from Zaire, Burundi and Tanzania while another 900,000 would continue to receive aid in refugee camps. The UN had earlier made a $688 mn appeal for 1995, covering over two million Rwandan and Burundian refugees and some 150,000 returnees. By mid-October, 83.4 per cent of those needs had been met.

In December, Rwanda expelled 43 aid agencies, mostly French, out of the nearly 150 operating in the country, accusing them of political bias and inefficiency. The move also indicated the government's dissatisfaction with the pace of reconstruction aid and its belief that the agencies were indifferent to the continuing threat from exiled Hutu extremists.

Worries about the security situation continued to grow with new reports of violence and government statements that Zaire-based Hutu militias were stepping up their attacks into Rwanda. In mid-October, Mr. Boutros-Ghali responded to reports of continuing cross-border infiltration into Rwanda and of uncontrolled arms flows in the region by setting up an International Commission of Inquiry. The six-member commission visited Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania and Zaire in November to investigate reports of military training and arms transfers to former Rwandan government forces and will recommend measures to halt illegal arms flows. The Security Council lifted its embargo on official arms shipments to Rwanda in mid-August, after the government appealed for permission to acquire weapons to defend itself.

On 12 December, the International Tribunal for Rwanda issued its first indictments of eight people for their roles in the 1994 genocide. The Security Council called on UN member states to cooperate with the tribunal by detaining people suspected of genocide and other serious violations of international law.

BURUNDI

In a letter to the Security Council on 17 January, Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali warned that a major international initiative was required to prevent the escalating violence in Burundi from developing into another tragedy in the Great Lakes region. His letter reported on the early January visit of Mrs. Sadako Ogata, UN High Commissioner for Refugees, to Burundi, who characterized the security situation there as "extremely serious," with Burundian government officials comparing it to "a civil war." Massacres and other "terrible things" are rife and the military does not have "full control" over all of the extremists, she said. Mrs. Ogata was sent as a personal envoy of the Secretary-General after the Security Council, on 5 January, condemned in the strongest terms those responsible for the violence.

In his 17 January letter, Mr. Boutros-Ghali reiterated earlier proposals he had made to the Council for the deployment of a UN rapid-reaction force on the Burundi-Zaire border and a police force to guard international relief workers. The U.S. reportedly opposed the dispatch of troops, on the grounds that the situa-

About half of the 1 million Rwandan refugees in Zaire are children, according to UNICEF.

tion did not meet the Clinton administration's criteria for peace-keeping missions. The US ambassador to the UN, Ms. Madeleine Albright, visited Burundi on 18 January to explore other steps that the US might be able to support.

Burundi President Sylvestre Ntibantunganya, meanwhile, called for all available means to be marshalled "to avoid a catastrophe like that in Rwanda." The situation in Burundi has sharply deteriorated in recent months, with extremist militias on both sides threatening to destroy the uneasy collaboration between the Hutu-led government and Tutsi-dominated military.

SIERRA LEONE

The World Food Programme began airlifting food into war-torn eastern and southern Sierra Leone in January as rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) stepped up their attacks on relief convoys. More than 600,000 displaced persons in the region are affected by what WFP called "a security nightmare."

The war has been intensifying since 1991 and has devastated the economy. Rebels have concentrated their attacks on economic targets such as the diamond and bauxite mines, and on highways and towns.

WFP reported that malnutrition is reaching "frightening levels," with some 1.5 million people — more than one-third of the population — displaced and in need of emergency food. By late October, $7.37 mn had been pledged for a $13.91 mn appeal for Sierra Leone and new refugees in Guinea.

Earlier in the month, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) said that it would help the government to conduct a measles immunization campaign, targeting 600,000 children in Kenema, Bo, Makeni, and other areas.

UN consolidated appeals, 1995
($mn)

	Requirements	Contributions (as of November)
Rwanda*	688.08	611.18
Liberia**	65.34	53.03
Somalia***	70.31	20.45
Sudan	101.43	39.11
Sierra Leone†	13.91	7.37

* includes refugees in Burundi, Tanzania, Uganda and Zaire
** from January through August 1995, to be replaced by $109.9 mn appeal launched on 4 October 1995
*** from January to June 1995
† from March to December 1995, includes new refugees in Guinea

Source: UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs

Meanwhile, Brig. Julius Maada Bio, Sierra Leone's new leader, who took over in a bloodless coup on 16 January, pledged to go ahead with multi-party elections scheduled for 26 February. Mr. Boutros-Ghali had called in late November for support for the government's democratization efforts as a way of restoring peace and stability. The UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs and the UN Development Programme sent a team of experts to prepare a coordinated plan for the demobilization and reintegration of combatants, while the UN Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs will provide election observers. ■

Donors meet to support Liberia's peace process

Donor countries, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) met at UN headquarters on 27 October to support Liberia's peace process and address its humanitarian needs. Co-chaired by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali, President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, and Mr. Wilton Sankawulo, chairman of the Liberian National Transitional Government, the meeting was "an encouraging first step" towards meeting Liberia's needs, said Under-Secretary-General Peter Hansen, the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator. For years a "forgotten emergency," Liberia today provides "a real example of the importance and complementary efforts by the UN and regional organizations in the restoration of peace," Mr. Boutros-Ghali declared.

Although not technically a pledging conference, the meeting did secure promises of some $143.7 mn from the US, European Community, United Kingdom, France and the Gambia for humanitarian aid, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, and for the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Observer Group (ECOMOG). The UN had issued a $110 mn humanitarian appeal for Liberia on 4 October and Mr. Hansen noted the urgency of implementing humanitarian programmes, both to meet the needs of affected people and to support the peace process.

After nearly six years of conflict, Liberia's warring parties signed an agreement in Abuja, Nigeria, on 19 August, providing for a cease-fire and a new Council of State to govern until elections, scheduled for August 1996. The disarmament of some 60,000 combatants was scheduled to begin in late January, although serious fighting broke out in late December between ECOMOG and one of the military factions.

Of Liberia's pre-war population of 2.4 mn, roughly 150,000 people have been killed and some 850,000 have fled to Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone. Another 1.3 mn, including large numbers of internally displaced persons, need humanitarian assistance within the zone controlled by ECOMOG.

The $110 mn consolidated inter-agency appeal covers the September 1995-August 1996 period, replacing a $65 mn, January-August 1995 appeal, 67.7 per cent of which was met. Current priority areas include food security, health, education, repatriation and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons, aid to vulnerable groups and demobilization and reintegration of soldiers.

Improved access to areas outside ECOMOG control have made it possible to reach communities cut off from aid for a year or longer. Relief agencies warn, however, that several thousand children could die from severe malnutrition, and in the upper Margibi and lower Bong counties, over 43 per cent of children under-11 are severely malnourished. More than 145 cases of suspected yellow fever have also been reported around Buchanan, Bassa County, since July, and the World Health Organization warns of health risks to all Liberians, as well as to neighbouring states, given the large-scale population movements.

Hopes are high that the humanitarian situation will begin to improve and that the Abuja accord will hold, even though a dozen previous peace agreements have failed. On 10 November, the UN Security Council adjusted the mandate of the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) to include investigation of cease-fire violations, monitoring compliance with other military provisions of the peace agreements and verification of the election process. UNOMIL will also help in demobilization and support the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), ECOMOG and the transitional government.

Six West African countries have pledged troops or military support to raise ECOMOG's strength to 12,000 from the current level of 7,000, provided that support is forthcoming from the international community. Appealing for that support, President Rawlings, current chairman of ECOWAS, told the UN meeting: "We are confident that the precedent set by ECOMOG's activities in war-torn Liberia will become a very good model in conflict resolution and peace-keeping around the globe."

Africa urged to pursue its own priorities

This is key to economic revival and to winning long-term donor support, says North South Roundtable

By **Salim Lone**
Johannesburg

Only a single-minded pursuit of its own development priorities, and a determination to seek aid solely on the basis of its own goals and vision, will enable Africa to revive its economies. This principled approach is also much more likely, in the long run, to gain increased support from donors.

That was the central conclusion reached after three days of intense and sometimes heated debate organized by the North South Roundtable (NSRT) in Johannesburg in late October. The Roundtable, which brought together experts and other international figures drawn equally from African and donor countries, with one-third of them women, agreed on a number of other contentious issues, and in the process, significantly helped to push forward the scope for a progressive consensus on which Africa and donors could interact.

Meeting in a country whose own remarkable political transformation and democratic vibrancy embodied the aspirations of all of Africa, participants welcomed the organizers' decision to focus discussion on the signs of hope and opportunity that abound on the continent: racist rule in South Africa has been defeated; the drums of war are silent for the first time in the entire southern Africa region since the 1960s; some 30 countries have held multi-party elections over the last six years and seen the return of democratic governments; and a small number of countries are determinedly pulling themselves out of economic decline.

Ms. Graça Machel: women's issues must be integrated into the mainstream of policy

Participants noted that the perception of Africa as a continent only of crises had sapped the confidence of its people, which had contributed in many instances to a loss of direction and a willingness to blindly accept donor-advocated policies. Participants were buoyed by the early actions of World Bank President James D. Wolfensohn, and by the active presence at all the Roundtable's sessions of Mr. Robert McNamara, the still influential US figure who in recent years has worked to make African development a major international concern. His comments at the meeting, as well as some of Mr. Wolfensohn's initial overtures, indicated the growing international recognition that the donor actions most likely to succeed are those taken in support of Africa's own priorities – a recognition significantly abetted, as many participants pointed out, by the awareness that many policies prescribed by donors over the last decade have proven to be flawed and unworkable in Africa.

Indeed, the UK journal, *The Economist*, wrote in its coverage of the Johannesburg meeting that "the World Bank – under its new President James Wolfensohn – is beginning to show the same impatience as Africans feel" over the fact that even countries that have undergone adjustment for a full decade have not done as well as expected.

Dr. Richard Jolly, the NSRT Chairman, could therefore say in his summation that many in the international community recognized the new dynamism in Africa today and elements of an emerging common vision for Africa's future "which need to be greatly strengthened and built upon: a vision of Africa, by Africa; a vision that is democratic; a vision that is firmly set on a path of human development-oriented growth, concentrating on poverty reduction and including special actions for women and children, and which lays strong human foundations for the future generations who must lead and sustain Africa in the 21st century. To achieve this, ways must be found to establish new relationships between Africa and the rest of the world."

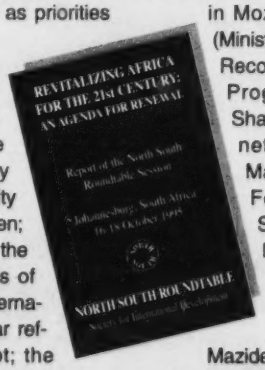
That such a new relationship was not just a dream was borne out when Norway's Assistant Foreign Minister Asbjorn Mathisen announced to the meeting that his country's official development assistance (ODA), already the world's highest in per capita terms, had risen by 8 per cent. He said this increase – extraordinary in the current aid climate – was primarily due to the fact that half of Norway's Cabinet ministers are women!

But despite agreement on many vital issues, the debate at the meeting clearly showed that there were no easy answers even on principles that would seem self-evident. For example, there was immediate agreement that "security,"

Priorities as the Roundtable saw them

The report on the meeting, written by NSRT Chairman Richard Jolly, enumerates the priorities agreed upon, and is an easy-to-read publication which sums up the debate on issues deemed by participants as priorities for a revitalized Africa.

These priorities included the necessity of effective African leadership both in the global arena and nationally; the need to focus on human security as a way to achieve the security of the state; wider roles for women; how to achieve the goals set by the series of international summits of the 1990s; the rethinking of international partnership, with particular reference to trade, aid and debt; the rethinking of regional institutions; and finally, the Africa Agenda for the 21st Century. All these priorities were invariably connected to the central and immediate goal of eradicating poverty — a goal realizable only through strong economic growth.



Participants included Ms. Graça Machel (former education minister and president of the Foundation for Community Development in Mozambique), Mr. Jay Naidoo (Minister in charge of South Africa's Reconstruction and Development Programme), Mr. Nathan Shamuyarira (Zimbabwean cabinet minister), Mr. Asbjorn Mathisen (Norway's Assistant Foreign Minister), Ms. Nafis Sadik, Mr. Mahbub ul Haq, Ms. Carolyn McAskie (CIDA Vice President), Ms. Lisbet Palme, Ms. Susan George, Ms. Victoria Brittain and Mr. Mazide N'Diaye.

The papers presented at the Roundtable will be published in *Development* magazine. The report is available from the office of Mr. Richard Jolly, United Nations Development Programme, New York, N.Y. 10017.

a hallowed priority for governments, needed to be thought of in human rather than in military and police terms so that essentials, such as access to food, water, shelter and protection from violence, would become the basis on which state security would be built.

Roundtable Chairman Richard Jolly: the opening of markets in Africa should be negotiated, not imposed.

There was disagreement on whether the meeting should call for large military cuts; many participants felt that strife-torn countries like Rwanda and Angola could not afford to begin disarmament. There was concern that any large-scale demobilization of soldiers could result in an increase in banditry unless those let go were offered jobs in other areas – a tall order when high unemployment is already a source of social and political tensions, and when governments are laying off many civil servants in a bid to balance budgets.

While none of the participants underestimated the gravity of the challenges facing Africa – an economic decline so severe that it will be several decades before per capita income of the 1970s is achieved again; civil war and conflict in a dozen countries; and cuts in aid budgets – the overall tenor of the discussions stayed optimistic.

South Africa was repeatedly held up as a model of what could be achieved: enlightened leadership; commitment to political reconciliation and democratic openness; the determination shown in its Reconstruction and Development Programme to meet social needs; recognition of the importance of gender equality (one-third of all ANC candidates in parliamentary and municipal elections must be women); and ensuring that aid conforms to its own priorities. If South Africa, with its awful history of tyranny and division could achieve this, then there was potential at least for other African countries to revive their economies and societies. Whether or not this happened depended primarily on Africa itself, a point more emphatically made by African rather than Northern participants.

Robert McNamara: Africans must be in the driver's seat of development.

Some of the most interesting debate was inspired by Mr. McNamara, who is co-chairman – with President Ketumile Masire of Botswana and Mr. Jan Pronk, The Netherlands Minister of Development Cooperation – of the influential Global Coalition for Africa (GCA). The former World Bank president, who is known for initiating a major Bank drive to reduce poverty in the developing world, had come to the Roundtable to better prepare for a crucial triennial meeting of the GCA.

At an early session, Mr. McNamara said he did not believe Africans should be seen as "partners" in the drive for development: they should in fact be in the driver's seat, taking full charge and full responsibility. The donors' role, he said, was to offer support for African goals. So he was distressed to see that virtually all African participants, almost all of whom favoured market reforms, felt that the World Bank paid insufficient attention to African concerns and priorities. Some participants were even more critical and one pointed out that three historic African initiatives – the 1980 Lagos Plan of Action, the 1986 African Priority Programme for Economic Recovery (adopted by the General Assembly as the UN Africa Recovery Programme) and the 1989 African Alternative Framework to Structural Adjustment Programmes (AAF-SAP) – were almost simultaneously countered by contradictory Bank policy initiatives.

The Roundtable pushed forward the scope for a progressive consensus on which Africans and donors can interact.

In discussing the relationship between Africans and donors, some African speakers, including Professor Adebayo Adedeji, said that many bad leaders were given legitimacy by the West rather than by their own people.

Other important issues raised at the meeting included the need for Africa to preserve its enormous biodiversity, to enhance its productive base and maintain an invaluable financial asset in what would be a "biological century"; the need to strengthen Africa's capacity for management through a "less inadequately remunerated" civil service, with donors redirecting resources to this sector through cutting back on foreign experts who, in some cases, cost more than a country's entire civil service wage bill; that conditionality as currently practiced was deeply flawed, and should be replaced by the much more fruitful concept of accountability, by both recipients and donors.

In this regard, donors were taken to task for their inherently contradictory stance: urging African governments to take charge, be self-reliant and promote grassroots democracy, while pressuring them to adopt donor-favoured policies and pursue austerity programmes, even though much of society felt strongly that such programmes were exacerbating poverty.

Despite criticism of many Bank policies, there was clear willingness by Africans to cooperate with this powerful financial institution. Most participants indicated that the Bank, at least at leadership level, had become much more conscious of Africa's concerns and seemed poised under Mr. Wolfensohn to make major changes in its relations with Africa.

The overall message from the Roundtable was that Africa must organize to press its case in the global arena. As Mr. Robert Davies, a South African Member of Parliament, stated about his own region, there is competition between those who believe in regional cooperation and those who favour neo-liberal adaptation to world reality. The latter is the default model; it will carry the day unless a real struggle is waged to ensure more mediated change.

The Chairman's report reached a similar conclusion for Africa as a whole. While the meeting emphasized Africa's to need chart its own path, the consensus was that African efforts would fail without simultaneous action to change international economic relations.

As the report said: "The speed with which markets have opened in the developing world as a whole, but most notably in Africa, has often led to the destruction of local production and productive capacity. Pressures to become more market-oriented have too often been accompanied by an ideology of unregulated markets that has been damaging to the weaker partners in trade. The opening of markets inside Africa and between Africa and the rest of the world must be negotiated rather than imposed." ■

Anti-war Agenda

from page 1

UNICEF / Giacomo Pirozzi

A child soldier patrols a crowded market square in Liberia. In 1988 alone, some 200,000 children under the age of 16 were fighting in wars.

Assembly to the present day. It covers the organization's early work in post-war Europe; the mass campaigns against disease; the development movement of the 1960s; the shifting development strategies of the 1970s; the "child survival revolution" of the 1980s; and the current "child rights" decade.

In addition, it contains the usual statistical tables on infant and child mortality, immunization, school enrolment and other basic indicators that chart each country's progress towards the goals set at 1990's World Summit for Children. As both the report and statistics note, progress has been especially slow in Africa (see box, next page). For example, of the 30 countries with the highest levels of child mortality, all but two are in sub-Saharan Africa.

According to the report, the world's numerous conflicts are taking an increasing toll on civilians — and therefore affecting an ever-greater number of children. While civilians accounted for only about 14 per cent of the dead in World War I, in World War II the proportion of civilians killed rose to 67 per cent. By 1990, a full 90 per cent of the victims of war were non-combatants.

Together with technological developments in warfare during and after World War II, the escalating death rate among civilians also can be attributed to the fact that today's conflicts are being fought mainly within states rather than between them. In the eyes of combatants in intra-state conflicts, the report notes, "the enemy camp is all around, and distinctions between combatant and non-combatant melt away in the suspicions and confusions of everyday life ... killing adults then is not enough; future generations of the enemy — their children — must also be eliminated."

UNICEF estimates that the number of children affected by war during the last decade include 2 million killed, 4-5 million disabled, 12 million left homeless, more than 1 million orphaned or separated from their parents, and some 10 million psychologically traumatized.

The children of sub-Saharan Africa, where many of the world's longest and bloodiest internecine conflicts have raged over the past 30 years, have suffered the most. Millions of young lives have been consumed by decades of civil turmoil that have raged in Angola, Ethiopia/Eritrea, Mozambique and Sudan — countries where entire generations have grown up in what the report calls a "vortex of violence" — as well as by the relatively more recent strife that has engulfed Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Somalia.

Death by starvation and disease

The report details a staggering loss of life in Africa's combat-scarred countries, where the lack of food and health services during war has combined with the stress of flight to kill about 20 times more people than bullets and bombs. Among some of the report's more disturbing statistics:

- Half or more of all children under the age of five in Somalia on 1 January 1992 were dead by the end of the year — and around 90 per cent of these deaths were due to the interaction of malnutrition and disease;
- From 1980 to 1988, Angola lost 330,000 children and Mozambique 490,000 children to war-related causes;
- Tens of thousands of children, some as young as six years old, have fought in conflicts in Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Liberia and Sudan. In 1988 alone, some

UNICEF's Anti-war Agenda

Prevention: much more deliberate effort should be made to address the underlying causes of violence and to invest more resources in mediation and conflict resolution.

Girls and women: specific measures are needed to monitor and ensure their needs and security in times of conflict.

Child soldiers: the minimum age of recruitment into the military should be 18 years, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (which currently sets a minimum age of 15 years) should be changed to ensure this.

Land mines: laws specifically banning the production, use, stockpiling, sale and export of anti-personnel mines should be enacted.

War crimes: they must be denounced as they are revealed, and international war crimes tribunals must have the support and resources to bring perpetrators to justice.

Children as zones of peace: children should be protected from harm and provided with essential services to ensure their survival and well-being.

Economic sanctions: "child impact assessments" should be carried out to determine whether the assumed long-term benefits of such sanctions are not outweighed by the immediate cost to children.

Emergency relief: aid should be seen as part of a process to help rebuild a society's capacity and promote development.

Rehabilitation: a much more deliberate effort needs to be made to demobilize both adult and child soldiers and rebuild communities so as to offer not just respite but also reconciliation.

Education for peace: to prevent conflict, education must seek to promote peace and tolerance, not fuel hatred and suspicion.

200,000 children under the age of 16 were fighting in wars;

- Since their introduction in 1947, 55 million AK-47 assault rifles have been sold worldwide. The weapons, which can be stripped and reassembled by a child of 10, now sell in one African country for $6 apiece;
- Since 1975, land mines have exploded under more than 1 million people and are currently thought to be killing 800 people a month. Children are less likely to survive an anti-personnel mine blast and those who do live will suffer severe injuries. Although land mines can cost less than $3 apiece to manufacture, they can cost up to $1,000 each to clear.

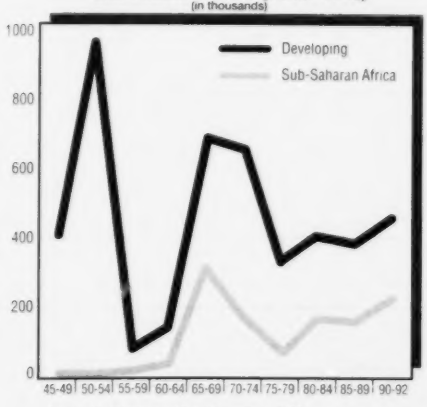
In addition to the threat of death or dismemberment, the report says that war can destroy the lives of children in numerous other insidious ways, including the witnessing of "events far beyond the worst nightmares of most adults."

Indeed, a 1995 survey of children in Angola found that 66 per cent had seen people murdered; 91 per cent had seen dead bodies; 67 per cent had seen people being tortured, beaten or hurt; and more than two-thirds had lived through events in which they had defied death. Such shattering experiences can cause "extreme nightmares, daily intrusive flashbacks of the traumatic events, insecurity and bitterness," the report said.

In one of the report's 15 "panels" or sidebars, former Mozambican First Lady Graça Machel, who is heading a two-year UN-supported study on the effects of conflict on children, speaks out most eloquently:

"All of us find it hard to believe that at the end of the 20th century, children are targets, children are expendable, children are victims, children are refugees, and even perpetrators – in one conflict after another, on virtually every continent."

War-related deaths (1946-1992)
(in thousands)



Source: World Military and Social Expenditures, 1993

Money for guns, little for health

Even if they never see a gun or bear witness to the savagery of combat, millions of children in Africa and other parts of the developing world suffer as scarce resources continue to be diverted to armaments.

As the report notes, "...One of the most distressing realities of our time is that most wars have been fought in precisely those countries that could least afford them."

Half or more of all the children under the age of five in Somalia on 1 January 1992 were dead by the end of the year.

Between 1960 and 1991, total annual military expenditures by developing countries rose from $27 bn to $121 bn. According to UNICEF, Angola, Ethiopia, Mozambique and Somalia for years spent more on their militaries than they did on education and health programmes. While Ethiopia and Mozambique, together with Eritrea, Uganda and Zimbabwe, have managed to reallocate their budgets towards the social sector, "distorted priorities remain," the report says.

Arms sales to developing countries have dropped in the last few years, but in 1994 sales still amounted to $25.4 bn, all of which could have been used to support development efforts.

The UN Development Programme estimates that just one-quarter of the money spent on armaments by developing countries over the last decades would have been enough to meet goals on primary health care for all, immunization of all children, elimination of severe malnutrition, provision of safe drinking water for all, universal primary education, reduction of illiteracy and family planning. The largest single supplier of arms traditionally has been the US. But in 1994 France acquired what the report calls "that dubious distinction," with the country's arms sales increasing dramatically, from $3.8 bn in 1993 to $11.4 bn in 1994.

Slow progress in sub-Saharan Africa

- The risk of dying before the age of five is still higher than in any other region, despite the decline in under-5 mortality from 25 per cent in 1960 to 18 per cent in 1993. In some countries, however, such as Madagascar, Zambia and Zimbabwe, the child mortality rate appears to actually have increased in recent years.
- Life expectancy, which increased from 37 to 51 years between 1950 and 1990, remains the lowest in the world.
- The proportion of children immunized has increased from about 20 per cent in the early 1980s to about 50 per cent in the early 1990s.
- The number of children in primary school has quadrupled since 1960, but only half of eligible children are enrolled and the gender gap remains wide.
- The primary school enrolment rate decreased in about half the region's countries in the early 1980s, a setback never experienced in other regions.
- The malnutrition rate has not declined, and one-third of the region's children suffer from stunting.

Children as zones of peace

In introducing the Agenda in London, Ms. Bellamy said its "starting point and inspiration" is the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, which has been ratified by all but a handful of countries. The Convention, which established social and economic rights for children, also covers their civil and political rights.

The Agenda adds UNICEF's name to the growing list of international organizations boycotting companies involved in the manufacture or sale of anti-personnel land mines. In the Agenda, UNICEF calls for a "Child Impact Assessment" prior to the application of economic sanctions on countries. In addition, the Agenda requests that the concept of "Children as Zones of Peace" — geographical areas or periods of time in conflict zones in which children can be protected from harm and provided with essential services — be elevated to the status of law.

The Agenda also demands much more investment in conflict-prevention activities and the promotion of reconciliation and rehabilitation. UNICEF also argues for special protection of women and girls because of the likelihood of sexual violence in wartime. ■

Development aid

from page 1

wise uneventful meeting for Africa were prospects of more borrower control over aid and better-quality support from the World Bank, which is also lobbying for a new initiative on multilateral debt (see page 14).

The listening Bank

The Bank says it is taking into consideration the opinions of borrowers and critics, and hopes to introduce more equitable and user-friendly lending arrangements. These changes, which require significant alterations in the way aid is designed and administered, also mean greater selectivity in allocation, and could slow down existing aid flows to the region.

The pledge to use the Bank's resources more selectively has already taken effect, judging by the lower lending figures in fiscal year 1995. New IDA and World Bank commitments fell by 15 per cent to $2.2 bn, the lowest level this decade and well below the average $2.9 bn lent between 1986-90. Adjustment lending also fell, both as a proportion of total lending (22 per cent in 1994 and 16 per cent in 1995) and in absolute terms (from $572 mn to $350 mn).

Bank officials attribute the decline to non-performance on economic reforms by some traditionally large borrowers of adjustment funds, as well as the longer time-span required to develop more appropriate projects. This is evident in the fall in technical assistance loans, as Bank advisers and borrowers seek to build local capacity to replace long-term expatriate assistance.

In any case, the IMF predicted in its 1995 World Economic Outlook that African countries with structural adjustment facilities in place in 1994 should see growth "sustained at a relative robust pace of about 5 per cent in 1995-96." Donor determination to protect such reformers suggests that these countries' flows will be the least affected. The Bank's Vice President for Africa, Mr. Edward Jaycox, says that in terms of cuts "(reformers) will be the last to be looked at." But others are already suffering: a quick look down the list of countries not reforming, including Zaire, Sudan and Somalia, shows a sharp drop in aid. Reforming countries, however, have also been hit. At Ghana's 1995 Consultative Group meeting, pledges were several hundred million dollars lower than 1993 levels.

The Bank says it is taking into consideration the opinions of borrowers and critics, and hopes to introduce more equitable and user-friendly lending arrangements.

World Bank

Benin's Finance Minister Paul Dossou, flanked by World Bank President James Wolfensohn (left) and IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus.

More than a marriage of convenience

Some delegates at the Bank/Fund meetings joked wryly that the funding crisis has at least forced the Bank and its traditional critics in non-governmental organizations (NGOs) closer together. In a meeting called to highlight the threat to IDA, Mr. Wolfensohn sat side-by-side with NGOs, including Forum of African Voluntary Development Organizations President Abdou El Mazide N'Diaye, Oxfam Director Stewart Wallis and Interaction President Julia Taft. This was a first for any Bank president at the annual meetings.

While the NGOs distanced themselves from the Bank's controversial structural adjustment policies, both sides stressed in public and private that the current association represents more than a marriage of convenience. In the Bank's Africa Division, piecemeal efforts at consultation with African NGOs have been under way in some resident missions for some time, and were reinforced in June when Mr. Wolfensohn visited Africa, his first trip as Bank president.

Mr. Wolfensohn spent much of the trip (to Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Uganda, Malawi and South Africa) talking to civil society organizations and individuals. On his return, he called for additional resources in each of the Bank's resident missions to liaise with local NGOs. He also wants the Bank to set up public information centres in each mission to enhance local understanding of Bank projects, and says local NGOs should be consulted on country assistance strategies.

African delegates in Washington welcomed Mr. Wolfensohn's promise of an "open and ready-to-learn Bank." While the African ministers urged the Bank to intensify its outreach campaign, they also pledged to play their part. According to Zambian Finance Minister Ronald Penza: "We know resources are short, and that domestic demands on (donor) budgets are high." Africa "needs to reorient and manage within the new environment, and it is up to Africans to contribute to the sustainability of the World Bank," he said.

But in addressing a central thrust of Bank policy, African governors voiced misgivings about "the pace at which many responsibilities in the development process can be transferred to the private sector, given that the private sector in many of our countries is almost either non-existent or in the early stages of development," said their communique.

Mr. Wolfensohn's directives seem to be strengthening moves towards wider and deeper consultation with borrowers, a key plank of a new strategy for Africa now on the drawing board for the Bank and other willing donors.

The strategy follows a review, under way since mid-1994, that has taken the Bank's economists and project staff "back to first principles," Bank officials say. The prescriptions, circulated for consultation among African governments, African and Western NGOs, and other donors and interest groups, were published in December as *A Continent in Transition: Sub-Saharan Africa in the mid-1990s*. The document draws up a balance sheet of donor policies in Africa and makes such key points as:

- Donor-sponsored economic reforms and projects cannot work without borrower commitment. Conditionalities in loan agreements are insufficient for the task and are often counterproductive in practice.
- Structural adjustment has achieved mixed results. It has largely delivered successful exchange rate and price liberalization, but it has fallen short in areas requiring more complex and finely tuned prescriptions – and broader consensus – such as fiscal reform. Existing instruments for transferring resources in support of policy-based reforms are relatively inflexible.
- Progress has been patchy and disappointing in deeper structural elements of the development agenda, including education, health and public sector reforms.
- Donors have followed their own agenda without adequately consulting intended beneficiaries. Aid has often been fragmented or contradictory, creating projects that local officials cannot identify with or manage.

The Bank says that aid should be given more selectively to countries "which design the details of their own development agenda and show commitment to it." It also proposes new lending instruments more suited to local participation and countries' differing needs.

Donor-sponsored economic reforms and projects cannot work without borrower commitment.

This includes "integrated lending" covering entire sectors, under which governments would design their public expenditure programmes and then negotiate with donors for funding of a sector or subsector. This new lending instrument, the Sector Investment Programme or SIP, has already been piloted in a Tanzanian road programme and an agricultural sector loan for Zambia. It covers both policy and project aid, targeting the savings-investment gap with transfers of budgetary support.

In this format, local input is essential and can be supported by technical assistance where necessary. If all goes according to plan, governments would be able to coordinate donor funding more effectively. Such arrangements should promote more equitable contractual relationships between partners, reducing the scope for older-style conditionalities.

The Bank would continue adjustment lending in areas where the record is strong, such as in underpinning foreign exchange and other macroeconomic reforms undertaken by committed governments. In this area it will also be more vigilant that lending conditions are met.

The Bank and the IMF envisage plenty of demand for adjustment lending. IMF Managing Director Michel Camdessus urged industrialized countries to contribute more to the IMF's long-term, low-interest enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF), which the Fund wants to extend, if necessary, by investing a modest proportion of its gold reserves. ■

UNCTAD calls for more flexibility on debt relief

By ***Mark Thomas***

The Naples terms for debt relief offered by the Paris Club of official bilateral creditors will significantly alleviate the debt burden of the poorest and most indebted countries only if eligibility criteria are applied flexibly, argued the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its *Trade and Development Report 1995*. The report pointed out that although the Naples terms were "heralded as a major step forward in the treatment of low-income debtor countries," Paris Club creditors have shown "some hesitancy" in implementing them in a way that provides the greatest relief to debtor countries.

Naples terms permit up to a 67 per cent reduction in export credit debt stock or debt service (principal and interest) owed to Paris Club creditors. But even if they are fully applied, many of the 41 highly indebted low-income countries (33 of which are in sub-Saharan Africa) will still struggle to service their multilateral debt, the report said, adding that "with few exceptions," a decade of adjustment policies supported by multilateral financing has not managed to "halt or reverse the economic stagnation of these countries and increase their capacity to service external debt."

Focusing on the eligibility criteria for Naples, UNCTAD noted that only debt contracted before the date of a country's first Paris Club rescheduling (known as the cut-off date) is eligible for reduction. And countries eligible for 67 per cent debt reduction must have per capita GDP under $500 and a present value of debt-to-exports ratio of over 350 per cent. Balance of payments projections are used to determine a country's "financing gap," which results in the amount of debt service reduction granted as well as the extent to which previously rescheduled debt is included.

UNCTAD argued that such stiff criteria make some low-income and severely indebted countries ineligible for the 67 per cent reduction, even though other indicators such as protracted debt payments and high debt service ratios underline their urgent need for it.

An UNCTAD simulation of the impact of Naples on 33 heavily indebted low-income countries showed that a 67 per cent debt stock reduction would significantly reduce the debt service ratio for more than half the countries. But due to the weight of multilateral debt, their debt service ratios would remain high, as would the risk of a future debt crisis.

According to the report, nearly half the total debt service of the 41 highly indebted low-income countries goes to the multilaterals. Their total multilateral debt more than tripled in 1982-93, reaching $55.5 bn, and in 1994 only three of the 41 countries were current on their multilateral debt obligations.

"The problem of multilateral debt of these countries is serious enough to warrant priority attention on the international agenda," UNCTAD said. "There is little doubt that these countries will have to rely for quite some time on highly concessional finance." ■

Multilateral debt: the debate continues

By ***Christina Katsouris***

Dashing hopes for a sweeping new initiative on multilateral debt, the joint World Bank/IMF Development Committee of finance ministers nevertheless left the door open at their October meeting for new proposals for "a small group of countries" in need of additional relief.

Expectations had risen in September after the leak of a World Bank internal paper that discussed the creation of a $4 bn special fund for poor, debt-distressed countries to repay principal and interest due to multilateral creditors. Financed by the Bank and other donors, this fund would disburse up to $400 mn a year for the first five years, $300 mn a year for another five years, and $100 mn for a final five years.

This innovative idea was not endorsed by the Bank's board, but was reportedly supported by Bank President James Wolfensohn. It avoided mention of debt cancellation, a concept opposed by some creditors. Kept separate from institutional balance sheets, this fund could minimize the perceived risk to the multilaterals' credit standing. They argue that debt cancellation might damage their credit ratings and raise their money market costs, which would be passed on to country borrowers.

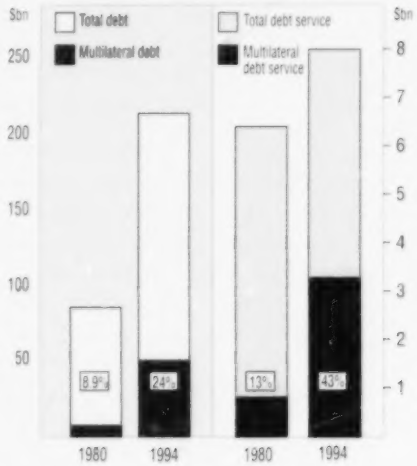
This would also have been the first multilateral initiative to avoid replacing old multilateral debt with new. Current relief includes the Bank's "fifth dimension," which provides soft loans from the International Development Association (IDA) to pay the interest on harder loans from the Bank. The IMF's low-interest enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF), used by some governments to repay higher-interest IMF loans, reduces payments but also replaces old debt with new.

The Bank argues that ratios of net present value debt-to-exports above 200 per cent are unsustainable. And analysts point out that nine of Africa's severely indebted low or middle-income countries have ratios of 200-300 per cent and another 19 are above 300 per cent.

The IMF, however, believes that current measures can help most countries reach debt sustainability when combined with adequate aid and appropriate policies. But it concedes that some, including Guinea-Bissau, Mozambique and Zambia, need additional relief. The IMF's conclusions indicate its belief that most countries still have sustainable multilateral debt service ratios.

Among countries which the IMF says need additional help, Guinea-Bissau and Zambia have the heaviest multilateral burden relative to other debt. In 1993, multilaterals accounted for 47.8 per cent of Guinea-Bissau's debt stock and 80 per cent of its debt service. But its payments show a multilateral debt service-to-exports ratio at a low 8 per cent. Zambia's multilateral debt burden ranged between 26 and 37 per cent of total debt. Yet its multilateral debt service-to-exports ratio was, at 20 per cent, higher than Guinea-Bissau's.

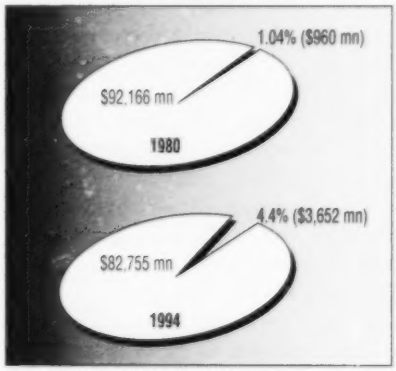
Growing weight of sub-Saharan Africa's multilateral debt burden



Source: World Bank, World Debt Tables 1994-95

Critics argue that the IMF understates the problem while overestimating the potential relief from current initiatives. They want improved multilateral and bilateral relief, notably more flexible application of debt stock reduction through the Paris Club's Naples initiative (see UNCTAD story on page 11) and more pressure on Russia to cancel debt holdings inherited from the former Soviet Union (over $1 bn from Mozambique alone).

Sub-Saharan multilateral debt service as % of export revenue



Source: World Bank, World Debt Tables 1994-95

Paris Club performance criteria for debt stock reduction are so tough that only Uganda has so far qualified. Due to various exclusions, the actual amount of Ugandan Paris Club debt stock reduced was only 26 per cent, well short of the 67 per cent Naples maximum.

Tougher criteria than Naples

Ironically, the Bank's paper implied even tougher criteria for multilateral relief, including both Naples and commercial debt stock reduction and a proven performance record. With few qualifiers for Naples stock reduction so far, potential beneficiaries would be hard to identify.

For all the ingenuity shown in circumventing the usual objections to multilateral relief, the Bank's leaked paper got a mixed reception. While NGOs welcomed it as a much needed solution to a problem set to move out of control, others, including some Bank officials, argue that the proposed fund would divert declining aid flows to debt relief.

Analysts disagree over the scale of the multilateral debt problem and where relief should be targeted. Some focus on multilateral debt's growing share of total debt and, especially of debt service – over 43 per cent in 1994 (see graph). This reflects the "preferred creditor" status of the multilaterals: debts owed them tend to be paid first and cannot be rescheduled.

Others believe this focus exaggerates the problem, since multilateral debt service averaged only 4.4 per cent of sub-Saharan Africa's actual export earnings in 1994. They argue that country ratios also vary greatly – multilateral service was 29 per cent of Uganda's export revenue in 1993, 12 per cent of Ghana's and 6.7 per cent for Mozambique – and by mid-1995, only 11 countries had ratios above 15 per cent.

Still, some economists and NGOs argue that these ratios alone justify the need for a sweeping initiative that helps to lower Africa's debt overhang. They, and the Bank, stress that much more needs to be done to ease Africa's debt burden, given the acknowledged adverse impact of debt on African development. ■

EU and ACP agree on revised Lomé pact

Five-year package less than expected; unraveling of relationship feared

By **Shada Islam**
Brussels

After 15 months of difficult and often acrimonious negotiations, the European Union (EU) and 70 African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries signed a revised Lomé Convention trade and aid package in Mauritius on 4 November. The deal includes $18.9 bn in aid for the ACP states for the next five years and some new concessions for their exports to the EU. Taking Europe's inflation rate into account — roughly 21 per cent over the last five years — the final aid figure does not amount to an increase in real terms.

"We're disappointed," admitted Mr. John Momis, ACP spokesman and Papua New Guinea's Minister for Information, after the ACP accepted the new aid package on 1 July. "This is natural when one receives less than one requested." EU officials were more upbeat: "We have a compromise between what was desirable and what was possible," EU Development Commissioner João de Deus Pinheiro commented.

The ACP group had asked for $20.5 bn in aid, up from the $15.7 bn it received during the 1990-95 period. France and the European Commission (EC) sided with the group, arguing that the public dispute over Lomé aid was sending the "wrong" message — one of EU indifference to the developing world.

The dispute over Lomé funding was finally settled at the EU summit in Cannes at the end of June. France agreed to put in an additional $130 mn and both Germany and the United Kingdom reluctantly raised their contributions. The EC found an additional $379.6 mn of unutilized resources in the Lomé Convention which it said it would put into the package, while the European Investment Bank promised to spend $2.08 bn on industrial development projects in the ACP states.

ACP officials are worried that EU governments, with the exception of France, are gradually losing their commitment to what was once described as the "model" for North-South relations. If the ACP and EU are unable to revitalize the agreement, it is feared that the Lomé Convention may not survive beyond the year 2000.

Accustomed to being treated as "special friends" of the EU, ACP countries were taken aback earlier this year when the United Kingdom, Germany and the Netherlands said they were going to slash contributions to the Lomé aid fund. The lack of enthusiasm shown by EU newcomers Sweden, Finland and Austria also was a disappointment to the ACP.

Weighing Tanzanian coffee for export: new trade concessions by the European Union will do little for Africa's commodity exports.

While ACP ministers reacted angrily, they have nonetheless accepted tougher aid disbursement procedures: they will now receive 70 per cent of their allocation at the start of the revised Convention, with the rest disbursed according to the results of a third-year review of projects and programmes. Mr. Pinheiro says the two-stage procedure will reward the more efficient ACP states.

A new clause in the amended Convention explicitly links all EU trade and aid benefits to ACP efforts to promote democracy and human rights. After strong ACP objections, the EU now says it will consult them before suspending Lomé benefits for an ACP offender — except in "emergency circumstances."

Clear pledge on debt relief

For the first time, there is a clear pledge that the EU will "contribute constructively and actively to the alleviation of the debt burden of the ACP states." Signaling a tougher EU approach at the same time, Commissioner Pinheiro has warned that he intends to secure the "best value for each Ecu (European currency unit) spent in the ACP states."

On the trade front, the ACP group has won additional concessions for its exports of farm and industrial goods to markets in Europe. These include tariff cuts or larger quotas for olives, wine, lemons, cereals, pork meat, figs and rice, as well as more flexible rules of origin for industrial products. Neither of these measures is likely to impact significantly on Africa, however.

Some EU officials have started looking beyond the present Lomé Convention and say the EU should draw up separate trade and aid pacts geared to the needs and priorities of different regions within the ACP. Reluctant to envisage the ACP's disintegration, its officials argue that complementary regional deals could back up the Lomé agreement. But others insist that the whole rationale of the "exclusive EU-ACP" relationship needs to be reviewed. "The Lomé Convention was always difficult to justify under GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and the WTO (World Trade Organization)," and it is "living on borrowed time,"says Mr. Peter Pooley, a former acting director-general at the European Commission's development division.

One way to avoid such criticisms would be to improve the ACP's international image, other EU officials say. Lord Plumb, a member of the European Parliament and co-president of the EU-ACP parliamentary committee, argues that the ACP group must work harder to establish its own identity: "It must make its collective presence more powerfully felt in the various multilateral institutions of the world — most notably the UN and the WTO." ■

Women stride forward from Beijing

African countries make strong commitments at Fourth World Conference on Women

By **Hasan Ferdous**
Beijing

Spontaneous applause erupted throughout the plenary hall at the Beijing International Conference Centre when, after two weeks of discussions and hard bargaining at the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW), the conference president's gavel came down to signal the adoption of a global plan of action. "Dear sisters and brothers, we have made it," said Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the Conference, reflecting the widely shared relief and deep sense of achievement.

The centrepiece of the 4-15 September conference was the Platform for Action, which Mrs. Mongella, a former diplomat and cabinet minister from Tanzania, described as "our legitimate basis to demand change" and a blueprint for action to promote women's status worldwide which "cannot now be hidden away and allowed to collect dust."

The document covers 12 "critical areas of concern" seen as the main obstacles to women's advancement. By identifying the obstacles, strategic objectives and actions needed at national and international level, the Platform gives comprehensive guidelines for promoting the social, economic and political empowerment of women, improving their health, education and training, and also emphasizing their marital and sexual rights, and ending gender-based violence.

Nearly 50,000 people attended the largest UN conference ever held and the parallel NGO Forum on Women, staged 45 kilometres outside Beijing. A total of 181 UN member states were represented, including all African countries.

Building on gains made since the first UN women's conference in Mexico City in 1975, and from the cycle of recent UN global conferences, the Beijing meeting significantly expanded the agenda for women's empowerment. UN Population Fund Executive Director Nafis Sadik pointed out that the conference set new benchmarks by linking women's social status and all forms of violence against women and affirming the right of women to control their own sexual expression. Most importantly, "the connection is made between advancement for individual women and progress for the whole society," she said.

Despite three preparatory meetings and many informal consultations over the past three years, the draft Platform for Action came to Beijing with nearly 25 per cent of its contents still disputed.

While delegates presented national positions to the main committee, two working groups and two informal groups hammered out the differences. Women headed all the negotiating bodies, including two Africans: Merwat Tallawy from Egypt and Nana Ama Yeboaa from Ghana. Both the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action were finally adopted by consensus, although some 40 countries registered reservations, mostly on health issues.

The Platform made poverty an area of critical concern, and governments agreed to fight the growing "feminization of poverty," provide social safety nets and strengthen state and community-based support systems. They will design and implement policies that support female-headed households and also increase women's access to land ownership, credit, inheritance, natural resources and appropriate technology.

But as Dr. Speciosa Wandira Kazibwe, Vice President of Uganda, noted, "All this needs money. Women must have money." Delegates struggled to balance the demand for resources with the reality of shrinking aid. While the developing countries' Group of 77 and China called for "new and additional resources," many donor countries spoke only of "adequate resources," new national commitments and restructured priorities.

The final compromise in the Beijing Declaration, the foreword to the Platform, has gov-

UNICEF/ Darroch Hyde

Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the UN Fourth World Conference on Women, speaks during a meeting held by UNICEF in Beijing.

Africa's commitments in Beijing

Some of the most significant commitments made in Beijing came from African governments, including the following:

Côte d'Ivoire:	Ensure 100 per cent enrolment of girls by 2000.
Congo:	Review all legislation to improve women's legal status by 2000.
Equatorial Guinea:	Enact laws on marital separation, widowhood, inheritance, family planning, forced marriage.
Eritrea:	Improve mother-child health care services.
Lesotho:	Increase women's access to credit.
Namibia:	Ensure 94 per cent enrolment of all primary-school age children by 2000.
Nigeria:	Establish a women's university.
South Africa:	Ratify the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, build new shelters for battered women.
Zambia:	Achieve enrolment parity by 2005.

ernments agreeing that implementation of the Platform "will require adequate mobilization of resources" at national and international levels as well as "new and additional resources" for developing countries from all funding mechanisms.

While Mrs. Mongella expressed satisfaction with the compromise and underlined the expanded role given to the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), others felt the Platform could have made a stronger case for new resources specifically aimed at the least developed and developing countries.

Several delegates raised the issues of foreign debt and structural adjustment programmes (SAPs). Some argued that SAPs had eroded vital social services in many countries and were undermining the advancement of women.

The Platform's "Global Framework" acknowledges that macro- and micro-economic policies and programmes, including SAPs, have not taken into account their impact on women and girls, especially those living in poverty. Some Western countries, giving up their initial opposition to a paragraph on excessive military expenditures, debt and structural adjustment, consented to the Platform's recommendation that SAPs must be designed to minimize their negative impact on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. The Platform also urges international financial institutions (IFIs) to seek durable solutions to the burden of external debt.

After enduring some scathing remarks by NGOs aimed at IFIs and SAPs, World Bank President James Wolfensohn won some praise after announcing the Bank's plan to commit $900 mn to girls' education over the next five years. On SAPs, he said the Bank must "take the criticism and adjust, but... it's necessary to get through the rhetoric and on to the issues."

African delegations had fought to secure the girl-child as the last of the 12 critical areas of concern in March 1995 when the UN Commission on the Status of Women, the convening body for Beijing, held the final preparatory meeting in New York. With strong support from the G-77 and China, delegates agreed that discrimination against girls could initiate a life-long process of deprivation and exclusion.

In the Beijing plenary, Nana Konadu Agyeman Rawlings, Ghana's First Lady, called for "education that empowers, education which gives skills, education which builds self-confidence" in the girl-child. Governments pledged to enact laws to ensure free and full consent to marriage, and also to move towards abolishing harmful traditional practices such as genital mutilation and prenatal sex selection. Ms. Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, said that "the greatest breakthrough in Beijing was the attention paid to girls," noting the strong consensus that no other social investment brings greater returns than quality primary education for girls.

The girl-child was also at the centre of a clash on inheritance rights. Some Africans who felt that traditional legal structures often discriminate against women in land rights supported the equal right of women and girls to inheritance. But delegates from some Islamic countries point-ed out that their religious inheritance laws, based on equity, granted a woman half the assets her brother inherits. For the Platform, delegates finally agreed on the "equal right to inheritance" of girls, and to governments "enacting, as appropriate, and enforcing legislation that guarantees equal right to succession and ensures equal right to inherit, regardless of the sex of the child."

That many countries were not entirely comfortable with the Beijing Platform was obvious at the final day's meeting of the main committee as delegation after delegation announced that they would formally enter their reservations.

One of the most controversial items was a proposed "footnote" in Section C (Health) which said that because of different cultural and religious practices, it was up to governments to decide the extent and manner of implementing the Plan. Sudan's Minister of State for Social Planning, Mariam Osman Sir El Khatim, argued that there is a trend to ignore cultural diversity on the global level and to impose one set of values as an "indispensable and unique model," effectively depriving the world of the benefits of humanity's vast and diverse heritage.

After late night negotiations, the footnote was dropped although its content stayed intact in the Platform's global framework. Implementation, delegates agreed, remains "the sovereign responsibility of each State, in conformity with all human rights and fundamental freedoms." They also recognized the "significance of and full respect for various religious and cultural values and cultural backgrounds and philosophical convictions of individuals and their communities" in achieving gender equality. Some NGO representatives ex-pressed concern over the "sovereign responsibility" language, noting that it could hinder implementation of the Plan in some countries.

Beijing was seen as "a conference of national and international commitment and action," and over 100 governments and UN bodies made formal commitments to the Platform's goals and objectives. These commitments were documented by NGOs and widely distributed.

Mrs. Mongella also reminded delegates that "the world will hold us accountable for the implementation of the good intentions and decisions arrived at in Beijing." Addressing government delegates as much as NGO representatives, she said: "Let us ensure that we carry the torch which was lit in Mexico City, and rekindled in Copenhagen and Nairobi, further forward from Beijing." ■

The Beijing Platform for Action

Governments agreed to recognize:

- Women's rights as human rights.
- Women's right to decide on matters related to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health.
- Women's equal right to inheritance and succession, through legislation and enforcement.
- Rape in armed conflicts as a war crime and, in certain cases, an act of genocide.

...They also pledged to:

- Develop methods for quantifying the value of women's unremunerated work.
- Ensure, by 2000, completion of primary school by at least 80 per cent of girls and universal primary education before 2015.
- Reduce maternal mortality by at least 50 per cent of 1990 levels by 2000 and another 50 per cent by 2015.
- Convert military resources to peaceful purposes to reduce the impact of conflict.
- Adopt and implement legislation to end violence against women.
- Guarantee equal pay for equal work.
- Ensure gender balance in government bodies and political parties.
- Ratify the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and limit/withdraw reservations.
- Give women full and equal participation in control over resources.

NGOs make themselves heard in Beijing

Vow to set up mechanisms to monitor the many commitments made by governments

By **Colleen Lowe Morna**
Beijing

Across the hallway from where representatives of various non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were registering their reservations to the Beijing Platform for Action, a group of women from a Yemeni NGO was explaining that Islam in its truest sense is gender-neutral. Earlier in the day at an NGO briefing, the Disabled Caucus announced its intention to claim compensation from the UN for failing to provide facilities for women with disabilities.

Shortly after the briefing, a lively group of NGO representatives engaged World Bank President James Wolfensohn in an unprecedented debate on the Bank's alleged role in worsening gender inequalities.

Senegal's Yassin Fall, a member of the Association of African Women for Research and Development, presented Mr. Wolfensohn with a petition signed by 1,000 women, calling on the Bank to increase the participation of women in decision-making. She also announced the formation of a global campaign at the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) called "Women's Eyes on the World Bank."

At the close of the session, Ms. Hazel Medina, who introduced herself as a "structurally adjusted youth from Trinidad and Tobago," made a date with the Australian-born Bank chief to meet on his final day in office to compare notes on how "the situation of women and poor people has changed."

Education is the crucial starting point for African women to begin playing a greater role in the continent's leadership.

Diverse, colourful, restive and not always in agreement among themselves, the 30,000 participants in the NGO Forum, in addition to more than 4,000 NGOs accredited to the FWCW, offered the greatest hope that someone will be keeping an eye on the promises made in Beijing. In contrast, only 300 NGOs were represented at the Third World Conference on Women in Nairobi a decade ago.

Rough road to Beijing

The cost and logistics of getting to Beijing were formidable for many women — especially those from Africa and Latin America. To complicate matters, hundreds of NGO representatives alleged before the conference that they had not been granted visas. Many of these were associated with exiled Tibetan and Taiwanese organizations, or supporting causes such as gay rights. Weeks before the NGO Forum opened, authorities announced that the venue had been shifted to Huairou, 45 kilometres away, sparking an outcry from NGOs accustomed to lobbying government delegations heavily at such conferences.

Over 1,300 NGOs formed a Women's Linkage Caucus around 28 themes on which they lobbied government delegations during the official conference. The Caucus set as its bottom line the protection of agreements pertinent to women reached at the Cairo population con-

African women leaders tell how they got to the top

The day Winnie Byanyima was born, one of her father's cows gave birth to a female calf. The old man rejoiced at the birth of the calf. He was less happy about having a second daughter.

That knowledge haunted Ms. Byanyima in her youth and propelled her to greater heights. She became one of the few African female aeronautical engineers. In Uganda's last election, the irrepressible Ms. Byanyima obtained 60 per cent of the vote in an eight-person race for parliament, defeating six male contenders and an incumbent cabinet minister.

Ms. Byanyima is chairperson of the 51-member Women's Caucus in Uganda's Constituent Assembly. She also serves as president of a network called African Women in Science and Technology. Her tale was one of several related at a panel discussion, "African Women in Leadership Positions," sponsored by the UN Development Programme (UNDP) at the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing.

Other panelists included Kenya's Eddah Gachukia, an educator and gender and development consultant, and South Africa's Navi Pillay, the first black woman to be appointed Acting Judge of the Supreme Court of South Africa and the only woman judge on the International Tribunal for Rwanda.

According to UNDP, 70 per cent of African women over the age of 25 are illiterate, compared to 40 per cent in Asia, and 20 per cent in Latin America and the Caribbean. Only 26 per cent of those enrolled in law and business studies in Africa — the two areas that have given men a leg up to the top on the continent — are women. By comparison, full gender parity has been achieved in these fields in Latin America and the Caribbean.

The only African country that has a woman politician above the rank of minister is Uganda, which has a female vice-president. Even in the social ministries, says UNDP, women make up less than 10 per cent of the leadership.

How can these statistics be changed? Education, the panelists

ference and Vienna human rights conference.

NGOs can claim important victories in the final positions adopted in the Beijing Platform. Although the Vatican reserved its position on the entire health chapter, and Islamic countries wanted it known that any agreements reached would be strictly interpreted according to *sharia* law, agreements reached in Cairo on reproductive health and rights were maintained.

Building on progress made in Cairo, NGOs pressed the issue of sexual rights in Beijing. Although delegates could not agree on the term "sexual rights," the paragraph states that "human rights of women include their right to have control over and decide freely and responsibly on matters relating to their sexuality, including sexual and reproductive health, free of coercion, discrimination and violence."

Ms. Barbara Klugman of the Johannesburg-based Women's Health Project, who played a key role in negotiations, explained that sexual rights "are about the integrity of the body. What we are saying is that no one other than a woman can make decisions about her body." This has far-reaching implications in matters such as rape and female genital mutilation. The conference also came out in support of women's rights as human rights — warding off efforts by some countries to weaken these texts.

The Economic Justice Caucus within the Linkage Caucus fought hard for wording that recognized the negative effects of structural adjustment on women in developing countries, and called for the allocation of "new and additional resources" for overcoming inequalities.

On the final day, the Women of Colour Caucus from the South openly accused the North of not respecting their views on issues included in the Beijing Declaration. Charging that issues of poverty, structural adjustment and developing country debt had been made "invisible" in the four-page Beijing Declaration, delegates from the caucus called for the document to be immediately withdrawn.

Most NGOs agree that what is most important now is the practical work of monitoring the promises their governments made in Beijing. At the conference, when government delegations rejected a suggestion that their commitments be appended to the Platform for Action, NGOs immediately mounted a "Scoreboard of Commitments" outside the press lounge to track the promises made in speeches.

Some 60 out of 150 countries came up with concrete promises. The analysis of these commitments threw up interesting observations, such as the fact that despite the commitment in the Platform for Action to ending violence against women, most countries shied away from saying how they intend to do so. Tanzania scored highly as the only country that mentioned women and the environment.

Ms. Sara Longwe, a gender consultant and NGO activist from Zambia, noted that her government promised to increase women's access to resources. "We will be demanding a gender policy to find out how the government intends making these allocations," she said. ■

NGOs assail the feminization of poverty

Dissatisfied that the Beijing Declaration — one of the two official documents of the Fourth World Conference on Women (FWCW) — was not strongly enough worded on issues of social and economic justice, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) with consultative status to the meeting released an alternative statement. Issued on 14 September, the day before the end of the FWCW, the "NGO Beijing Declaration," which is being circulated for endorsement by NGOs worldwide, focuses on the globalization of market economics as "a root cause of the increasing feminization of poverty."

It states that a decade after the Third World Conference on Women, its decisions have not been fully implemented by any country, and that the "intersection of gender, race and poverty creates multiple burdens of discrimination for many women of colour."

Asserting that the imposition of structural adjustment programmes on countries in the South and economic restructuring in countries in the North has resulted in "increasing poverty, debt and unemployment," the Declaration calls on governments to take action on the cancellation of multilateral debt and on enforcing the accountability of international financial institutions. "Economic rights are human rights," the Declaration states.

The NGOs also demand the adoption of alternative development models which are based on "equality, mutual respect, true participation and accountability to all women" and are "economically and socially equitable and environmentally sound." The Declaration calls for "new and additional financial, technical and other resources" to fulfill commitments to women made in previous international forums.

— Beldina Auma

agreed, is a crucial starting point.

Almost choking with emotion, Ms. Gachukia told the packed audience how her mother had run away from home to go to a mission school in the days when education for girls was unheard of. The clan was only persuaded to allow her to stay when she came back with a bag of maize grown in the school garden. Ms. Gachukia's mother taught her to read before she was six. Her mother died the year she enrolled in school. "This head start I had in life is my only claim to being a leader," Ms. Gachukia said.

The Kenyan activist is a founder-member of the Forum for African Women Educationalists, an organization that advocates equality of educational opportunities for boys and girls.

Is affirmative action necessary? Yes, was the resounding response of the panelists. Recalling how the signs on the toilet doors in the Supreme Court of Durban used to read "Judges" and "Secretaries" just a few years ago, Navi Pillay said she would never have got to the bench if President Nelson Mandela had not made a conscious decision to appoint a woman.

Can women beat men at their own game? Yes, came the response from Ms. Byanyima, as she recalled her slippery climb up the political ladder.

"As a woman, you are not meant to be a leader, yet half of those you are looking to vote for you are men," she noted. "I began by looking for messages that would not alienate men. I told them I was not looking to be a ruler, but rather a messenger. The idea of a woman delivering a service went down well... after all, what else do women do?"

If men are powerful because they exude strength, Ms. Byanyima reasoned, she too had to make a public display of power. So she flew a small aircraft over her constituency, distributing pamphlets. "A woman who can fly an airplane," a male villager gasped. "This is surely a different kind of woman!"

Can women at the top make a difference? Or do they just adopt a male view of the world? Women understand struggle; they are generally good organizers, good borrowers, and are used to performing multiple roles, noted Ms. Pillay. Most of all, she said, "women don't rush to war, because we have been socialized to use words." ***C.L.M.***

Women: the breadwinners of the world

UNDP's Human Development Report highlights contribution of African women

By **Margaret A. Novicki**

Considered unequal to men by legal systems in many countries, women also constitute 70 per cent of the world's poor and two-thirds of its illiterates. They occupy only 14 per cent of managerial and administrative jobs, 10 per cent of parliamentary seats and 6 per cent of cabinet positions. They often work longer hours than men, but much of their work remains unvalued, unrecognized and unappreciated. "And the threat of violence stalks their lives from cradle to grave," states UN Development Programme (UNDP) Administrator James Gustave Speth in the 1995 *Human Development Report*, which focuses on gender inequities.

Margaret A. Novicki

Eighty per cent of the people producing food in Africa are women.

Arguing that the development process has been unnecessarily hampered by the exclusion of women from many opportunities, Mr. Mahbub ul Haq, principal author of the report, says: "There is an unwitting conspiracy on a global scale to undervalue women's work and contributions to society... In virtually every country of the world, women work longer hours than men, yet share less in the economic rewards. If women's work were accurately reflected in national statistics, it would shatter the myth that men are the main breadwinners of the world."

This is especially true in Africa where women's economic contribution is higher than in other regions. Latin American women and Asian women work a respective 28 per cent and 36 per cent of all hours in economic activities in the market or in the subsistence sector, while African women work 44 per cent. This work qualifies for entry in national income accounts, but is most often omitted.

Eighty per cent of Africa's food producers are women and in rural Kenya, for example, they work on average about 56 hours a week. Women who produce cash crops, such as tea and coffee, work 62 total hours a week, while men work only about 42 hours a week, the report finds.

Yet only 69 per cent of female farmers in Africa receive agricultural extension visits, compared with 97 per cent of male farmers, and only 7 per cent of extension agents are women. Men also dominate access to such assets as livestock, technology, infrastructure, and most significantly, credit.

Rural women in Africa receive less than 10 per cent of the credit to small farmers and only 1 per cent of the total credit to agriculture. In 1990, multilateral banks allocated $5.8 bn for rural credit to developing countries, yet only 5 per cent reached rural women.

Despite their predominant role in agriculture, African women rarely have legal control over the land they farm, even among female-headed households. In Kenya, a woman has access to land only if she has a living husband or son. In Botswana, Lesotho, Namibia and Swaziland, married women are under the permanent guardianship of their husbands and have no right to manage property.

"Human development is development of all the people," says Mr. ul Haq. "No society can progress half-liberated and half-chained. Human development, if not fully engendered, is fatally endangered."

This sixth edition of the *Human Development Report* was launched by Mr. Speth in Washington, and by Mr. ul Haq in Oslo a month before the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women to provide input to the meeting's debates.

In a videotaped message to the Washington launching, Ms. Hillary Rodham Clinton, the US First Lady, remarked that for participants at the Beijing conference, "the report serves as a timely reminder that women everywhere deserve the opportunity to become full participants and decision-makers in their own lives as well as in the destinies of their countries."

Women at the margin

One of the report's major premises is that work which is unpaid is regarded as having less status than work for pay. Most of the work undertaken by women is family- and community-centered — ironically among the most powerful contributors to human development — but it is also unremunerated and therefore not recognized in labour statistics or accounts of national income. Out of $16 trillion which goes unrecorded in the global economy each year — the value of unpaid work performed by men and women and the underpayment of women's work in the market sector — $11 trillion is the "invisible" contribution of women.

Women work "at the margin of major development efforts and programmes" — one of the main reasons for their limited access to income and economic opportunities, the report notes. Women's work is also more affected than men's by environmental degradation, which increases the time and energy they must expend to collect water and wood. In Mozambique, women spend more than 15 hours a week collecting water, and in Senegal, about 17.5 hours.

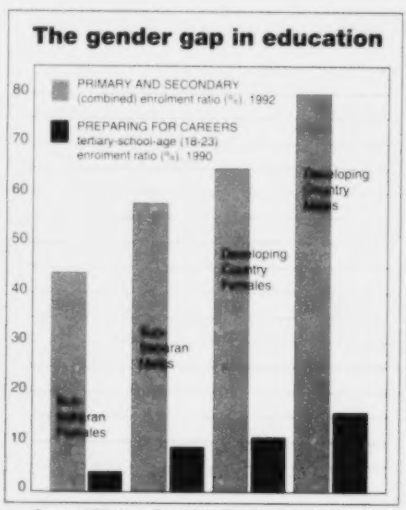
Technological changes often aggravate the disadvantaged situation of women. In Sierra Leone, the mechanization of rice cultivation cut men's workload, but increased women's work-day by half because more planting and transplanting — tasks normally performed by women — were needed. Women use draught animals in farming only rarely due to their prohibitive cost and cultural traditions which discourage the practice. Yet weeding, a major task for women, can be done six times faster

with animal traction, and can double or triple productivity.

The report notes that women in formal employment normally receive a much lower average wage and work longer hours than men. Suffering a proportionally higher rate of unemployment than men, as well as high underemployment in the formal sector and occupational segregation forcing them into certain job categories, women have moved in ever-increasing numbers into the informal sector. But that sector is "far less secure, pays less than the minimum wage," and involves poor and strenuous working conditions. This trend has been especially marked as economic crisis has reduced job opportunities and increased the need for additional family income.

In Congo and Zambia, women account for two-thirds of informal production in the services sector (excluding transport). In 1984-85, nearly half the economically active women in urban Botswana were working in the informal sector, compared to only 10 per cent of men. And in Nigeria, 94 per cent of street food vendors are women.

Structural adjustment, the report said, imposes a double burden on poor women. Having little to cushion them against its impact, they have to take on more work to compensate for income shortfalls since they are primarily responsible for making family ends meet. They are also hard hit by cutbacks in social spending on health and child care, family planning and education. In Harare, Zimbabwe, the number of women dying in childbirth doubled in two years after an adjustment programme was implemented in 1991 and health spending was cut by a third.



Source: UNDP, Human Development Report, 1995

The UNDP report illustrates the bleak social profile for African women. They are 180 times more likely to die from pregnancy complications than Western European women. In some countries where the total fertility rate is seven live births per woman and maternal morbidity is one in 50, there is a one-in-six chance that a woman will not survive her reproductive years. Maternal mortality rates in sub-Saharan Africa are the highest in the world, with 150,000 women dying from birth-related causes each year.

Participation is essential

A major source of the problem may be that although they constitute half the electorate worldwide, few women gain access to the corridors of economic and political power. The *Human Development Report* devised a gender empowerment measure (GEM) that examines variables reflecting women's participation in political decision-making, access to professional opportunities and earning power. In one bright note for Africa, South Africa (24 per cent) and Seychelles (27 per cent) rank among the top five developing countries in the level of women's representation in national parliaments.

But most sub-Saharan countries are concentrated at the bottom of the GEM rankings and the gender-related development index (GDI), which focuses on gender inequalities. Sierra Leone, Mali, Niger and Burkina Faso are among the five lowest on the scale. Women in these countries face a "double deprivation": overall human development achievement is low and women's achievement is lower than men's.

Although there has been little progress for women in the past two decades, an era of "expanding capabilities and limited opportunities," the report highlights some positive trends — in particular strides toward gender equality in education and health.

Gender gaps in adult literacy and school enrolment halved between 1970 and 1990 in the developing world, and women's literacy rose from 54 per cent of the male rate in 1970 to 74 per cent in 1990. In Africa, female enrolment rates at secondary level increased from 8 per cent in 1960 to 32 per cent in 1991. Zimbabwe raised the adult women's literacy rate to 70 per cent or more.

Women's life expectancy increased in all countries except Uganda, largely due to HIV. The epidemic slowed the rate of improvement in women's life expectancy in other countries as well, including Rwanda, Zambia and Zimbabwe. And while fertility rates have fallen in most countries since 1970, sub-Saharan Africa recorded the smallest reduction. Of the 14 countries in which fertility rates increased, 11 are in sub-Saharan Africa.

"Gender equality is an essential aspect of human development," the *Human Development Report* declares. It goes on to propose an action agenda for policy-makers (see box), arguing that the barriers that have perpetuated inequality must be broken by a combination of government intervention and political activism.

While the relationship between women's participation in political institutions and their contribution to the advancement of women has yet to be established, a 30 per cent level of participation is considered the minimum requirement for women to exert a meaningful influence on the national decision-making process. Unfortunately, African countries have a long way to go to attain that level. ■

Equalizing gender opportunities

While acknowledging that the pace of progress on gender issues has differed around the world, the *Human Development Report 1995* says that all nations can and should implement, immediately, the following measures:

- **Setting a firm timetable to end legal discrimination and establishing a framework for the promotion of legal equality;**
- **Restructuring social and institutional norms in order to extend more choices to men and women in the workplace, such as more flexible work schedules and expanding maternity and paternity leave;**
- **Attaining a 30 per cent threshold as a minimum share of decision-making positions for women at the national level;**
- **Implementing key programmes for universal female education, improved reproductive health and better access to credit for women;**
- **Targeting national and international efforts to programmes that give all people, particularly women, greater access to economic and political opportunities.**

Africa-Asia: learning from the 'Tigers'

By **Josephine Masimba**
Harare

Africa's need to adapt and emulate aspects of Asia's development experiences was underscored at a workshop for Eastern and Southern Africa held in Harare. Asian-African cooperation was among the major themes, along with the critical developmental roles of the private sector, capacity building and peace and stability. Participants agreed on the critical importance of creating the type of environment that spurred rapid growth in Asian economies which were at roughly similar levels of development with Africa 30 to 40 years ago.

The 26-27 July workshop, was part of the follow-up to the 1993 Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD), was attended by representatives of 22 East and Southern African countries as well as six Asian countries, and was co-organized by the Japanese government, the UN Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries (OSCAL) and the UN Development Programme.

African countries have already begun to create the appropriate space for economic development, noted Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Stanislaus Mudenge. Governments have introduced liberalization and other private sector-friendly policies to stimulate both domestic and foreign investment, domestic savings, industrial development and diversification. "The challenge is now on the private sector to take advantage of this conducive enabling environment," he added.

But participants also pointed to the significant involvement of governments in Asian success stories and wondered why Africa's development partners advocate an almost total withdrawal of governments from the economy.

Transparency and participation

One major recommendation of the workshop was for African countries to improve their governance through transparency and the rule of law, the prevention and management of conflicts and democratic participation. A particular emphasis was put on increasing the participation of women in all aspects of the society and economy, with speakers agreeing that women were already highly active in income-generating activities and crucial to equitable development. "There is now greater consensus that economic growth in itself is not enough, that human development is equally important, and that development should be human-centred," said Ms. Thelma Awori, UNDP's Resident Representative in Zimbabwe.

AM Mozambique

Africa needs additional investment in its industries as well as in agriculture.

Also highlighted was the importance of expanding Africa's narrow base of skilled professionals, although one participant warned that "investments in higher education in Africa tend to have a low return and benefit external rather than domestic labour markets." The workshop recommended that Africa tailor education to suit local conditions and emphasize primary and vocational rather than liberal education as a means of reducing dependence on expatriate experts and technocrats. This, said Sriprapha Petcharamesree of Thailand's Department of Technical and Economic Cooperation, was the secret behind South-East Asia's so-called 'miracle'.

Turning to cooperation, participants urged Asian countries to develop open-door trade policies with Africa, to increase their funding for development programmes and to invest more in the continent. Some participants also stressed that Asia should not treat Africa as a pool of relatively cheap human and natural resources. But as OSCAL's acting chief, Mr. Emmanuel Goued Njayick, observed: "Of course Africa cannot enter into partnerships naively... Both parties must draw some benefit from the association and one can still bargain skillfully even from a position of weakness."

Participants agreed that better cooperation with Asia would include expertise and experience-sharing through exchange visits involving officials and students, as well as closer ties between chambers of commerce and such promotional activities as trade fairs.

No guarantee of success

But all this would not guarantee successful replication in Africa of Asia's great leap forward due to the vast political and cultural differences between the two continents, warned Mr. Mohamed Sadli, an economist and advisor to the President of Indonesia. "The applicability of the Asian experience is a tenuous proposition. East Asia is so big and diverse and hence there is no single development model," said Mr. Sadli, adding that South-East Asian countries could be a more relevant development model for sub-Saharan countries than other Asian newly industrialized economies and Japan "because the latter have achieved too high a level of industrialization already."

Workshop participants decided to set up a core group of experts to define Africa's priorities for cooperation. The group, comprising Angola, Botswana, Eritrea, Kenya, Seychelles, South Africa, Zambia and Zimbabwe, would meet later, probably in Seychelles, to plan its future cooperation. It will be assisted by the Joint Secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa, the African Development Bank and the Organization of African Unity, as well as by Africa's sub-regional groupings. ■

Josephine Masimba is a Harare-based correspondent for Inter Press Service (IPS).

Conflicts, emergencies drain resources

The developmental costs of Africa's conflicts, along with the broader question of how to reduce their prevalence, were among the issues debated by a high-level symposium on "Peace and Development: Problems of Conflict in Africa," convened by the UN Office of the Special Coordinator for Africa and the Least Developed Countries of the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development (OSCAL/DPCSD) on 11-12 October.

The gathering, at the United Nations University in Tokyo, was a follow-up to the Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in 1993, which found that "stability and security are prerequisites to sustainable development." Chaired by Mr. Yasushi Kurokochi, Japan's ambassador to Switzerland, the meeting attracted high-level participation from Africa, including two former heads of state — Major Pierre Buyoya of Burundi and General Amadou Toumani Toure of Mali. Ms. Graça Simbine Machel, former education minister and president of the Foundation for Community Development in Mozambique, was co-chair, along with Mr. Ibrahima Fall, UN Assistant Secretary-General for Human Rights.

Other participants included a former foreign minister from Cameroon, university professors from Egypt and Kenya, and representatives of donor countries, UN agencies and international organizations, including the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Global Coalition for Africa and the International Peace Academy.

The conference noted that while an international consensus has emerged on the linkages between peace, stability and security and Africa's development and growth — the UN New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s, TICAD in 1993 and the OAU's Cairo Agenda for Action adopted in March 1995 have all emphasized this point — conflicts continue to drain the continent of precious resources.

A few statistics were cited which brought this point into sharp focus:

- Between December 1992 and November 1994, $1.6 bn was spent on the US-led military operation in Somalia, an amount equal to two years of US development aid to sub-Saharan Africa.
- The UN has spent over $3.6 bn on peace-keeping operations in Africa since 1991, while UN agencies have dramatically increased their emergency relief budgets.
- In 1990, the ratio of military personnel to doctors in Africa was 83:1, compared to 19:1 in developing countries as a whole.

Participants noted that more resources must be spent on addressing the root causes of conflict and taking preventive action in order to free up both internal and external funds for African development. They identified four measures — preventive development, improved governance, preventive diplomacy and the establishment of early warning systems — that, if combined, can minimize the outbreak of violent conflict.

The concept of preventive development acknowledges that some of the conflicts in Africa have been exacerbated by the economic crises of the past two decades, which can fuel a breakdown in the social and political order. Therefore, food security, relief-to-development activities, regional integration and cooperation and human resource development should all be pursued as key elements of a development strategy which continuously tackles the root causes of conflict.

But with authoritarian modes of governance inherited from the colonial past, African governments have kept themselves in power through a combination of violence and divide-and-rule. Because the majority of its conflicts are internal in origin, for conflict prevention to be successful in Africa, governments must engage in dialogue with all national and local groups and be responsive to their demands.

Conference participants recommended that African states consider power-sharing in the context of democratic elections as a conflict-prevention strategy. Essential to the creation of a strong democracy is an appropriate institutional framework which includes: constitutional reform to guarantee the rights of minorities; electoral reform to allow for free and fair elections; an independent judiciary; police reform to guarantee fair and impartial enforcement of the law; and a free press.

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including religious, human rights, lawyers and women's groups, should participate in conflict prevention by facilitating the airing of grievances. And African traditions, where chiefs and elders are called upon to mediate disagreements, should also be incorporated in conflict prevention strategies.

Another tool identified by participants to limit the outbreak of conflict is preventive diplomacy, involving mediation of emerging confrontations before they become too violent, as the UN and OAU have attempted in Burundi. However, participants pointed out, preventive development and good governance are "the most appropriate and effective strategy for preventing conflicts from reaching such a volatile level." Lastly, participants agreed, early warning systems are required in order to provide decision-makers and mediators with reliable and accurate information in order to defuse potential violence. But for such systems to be effective, the international community must be ready to respond to prevent the "damaging consequences of inaction."■

UN troops in Somalia: the UN has spent over $3.6 bn on peace-keeping in Africa since 1991.

Mark Thomas

Angola on the road to reconstruction

Far-reaching economic reforms and substantial international assistance needed

By ***Tony Hodges***

One year after the Lusaka Protocol put Angola back on the path to peace, attention is increasingly being focused on the measures needed to revive the country's devastated economy and improve conditions for its people, many of whom are now living on the edge of survival. Economic recovery and improving the well-being of the people are not only urgent objectives in their own right, but indispensable conditions for restoring cohesion to Angola's severely destabilized society and consolidating the peace process.

In the bluntest terms, Angola could face spreading crime and banditry and a relapse into violence unless ordinary Angolans can meet their basic needs through productive employment and income-generating activities, and unless a framework is created for the successful reintegration of large numbers of displaced peoples, refugees and demobilized soldiers.

UNICEF / Adrian Pereira

Damaged by warfare, wells and other basic infrastructure must be repaired in hundreds of villages.

There are prospects for eventual success if the government, along with the private sector, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and the international community, work together to provide the strategies, policies and resources needed to rebuild the country. With oil, diamonds, many other valuable minerals and plentiful arable land, Angola is potentially a prosperous country despite the enormous problems it faces. But to achieve its potential for successful recovery, Angola will need far-reaching economic reforms and substantial international assistance.

Tony Hodges, a former managing editor of Africa Recovery, *is the author of* Angola to 2000: Prospects for Recovery, *published by The Economist Intelligence Unit in 1993. In 1994-95, he helped prepare Angola's Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation.*

Angola's social fabric has been deeply damaged by almost two decades of war. The conflict uprooted a large portion of the rural population, accelerating the normal process of exodus to the cities, and plunged the vast majority of Angolans into acute poverty. One of the most dramatic developments of the past two decades has been the rapid urbanization of Angolan society and the disintegration or complete disappearance of communities as hundreds of villages were partially or totally depopulated. About 1.25 million people, 10 per cent of the total population of 12.7 million, are classified as internally displaced (*deslocados*) by the UN, while 300,000 more are refugees in neighbouring countries. About 2.7 million Angolans currently require emergency humanitarian assistance to meet their basic needs.

These figures do not give a full picture of the social upheaval created by the war and the accompanying economic crisis. The urban proportion of the population has risen from 15 per cent in 1970 to more than 50 per cent, straining limited urban infrastructure such as water and sewage systems that have been damaged, destroyed or are in disrepair due to inadequate maintenance and investment. Huge, poverty-stricken squatter settlements, with woefully inadequate basic services and very high levels of unemployment and underemployment, have grown up around all the major cities.

Social disintegration has been fueled by the prevalence of weapons among civilians and the cultural impact of the war on teenagers and young adults. These two age-groups were forcibly conscripted by the rival armies and they have been the most deeply affected by the violence. While an estimated 200,000 Angolans are under arms in the military forces of the government and the UNITA opposition movement, banditry has become commonplace in many parts of the countryside along with an upsurge of violent crime in the cities.

Education and health hard hit

The war left thousands of schools and health facilities destroyed, damaged or abandoned. And with priority in budget allocations increasingly given to military expenditure, debt servicing and price subsidies, budget outlays for education and health have been squeezed — accounting for only 4.4 per cent and 2.8 per cent respectively of the 1994 government budget, according to UNICEF.

The education system expanded rapidly after independence in

1975, with enrolment in the eight years of primary schooling rising from 613,000 in 1973/74 to 1.93 million in 1979/80. But the spread of conflict across rural Angola during the 1980s reversed these gains. By 1990/91, enrolment in basic education was down to 1.15 million. During the brief interlude of peace in 1991/92 that followed the Bicesse peace accords of May 1991, many schools reopened and enrolment rose again. But the resumption of war resulted in the destruction, damage, looting and abandonment of thousands of schools.

For example, in March 1995 only 34 of the 323 "first level" schools (covering the first four years of education) in the province of Malange were still functioning and in most provinces of the interior, between 80 and 90 per cent of schools have closed.

Angola's infant mortality rate —195 per 1,000 live births by UNICEF estimates — is among the highest in the world.

The network of health facilities in rural areas contracted during the 1980s as the war spread, and the situation worsened further following the collapse of the peace accords. Of the network of six hospitals, 14 health centres and 35 health posts once providing services in the province of Lunda-Norte, only four hospitals, one health centre and two health posts are still operating. Due to the steep decline in budget allocations for health, those facilities still functioning lack equipment and any drugs other than emergency stocks of basic medicines provided by UNICEF and NGOs.

The contraction of the health service, along with unsafe water and poor nutrition, has resulted in the growing incidence of serious diseases, including acute strains of malaria, cholera and severe diarrhoeal diseases, tuberculosis and measles.

As a result of these trends, the country's mortality rates are among the highest in the world, with UNICEF estimating the infant mortality rate (0-1 year) at 195 per 1,000 live births and the child mortality rate (1-5 years) at 320 per 1,000 live births. These figures compare with averages of 93 and 172 respectively for sub-Saharan Africa, according to World Bank data for 1993.

The collapse in food security

One of the most serious consequences of the war was the damage done to the agricultural sector. As rural populations were displaced and land mines limited the areas that could be cultivated, food production and other agricultural activities declined, leaving the country increasingly dependent on international food aid. The dangers of road transport made rural marketing almost impossible in many parts of the country, leaving farmers in a position to produce agricultural surpluses with no incentive to do so.

According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), food production per capita has declined by about a third since 1979-81. Production of maize, the main staple in the populous central provinces and an important crop in most other regions, is estimated to have fallen to only 196,000 tons in 1994, compared with 854,000 tons in 1973 when Angola exported a maize surplus.

The most recent statistics indicate that the cereal harvest rose somewhat in 1995 (to 273,000 tons, including 235,000 tons of maize) due to good rainfall. But the harvest still covered less than a third of national requirements, which are variously estimated at between 800,000 and 1 mn tons a year.

The decline in agricultural production was mirrored in most other sectors of the economy, except for the offshore oil industry (see page 28), and to a limited extent the fishing industry. The important diamond mining industry was disrupted by the occupation of mining sites by anti-government forces and gangs of illegal miners, and order is yet to be restored in the mining areas. Manufacturing industries, which had been set up mainly to process local agricultural produce, lost their internal sources of supply, were starved of foreign exchange for imports and suffered from cuts in electricity and water supply.

Due to the war, especially the last two years of intensive conflict (1992-94), much of the country's basic infrastructure was destroyed, severely damaged or is in disrepair. Roads have become impassable in many regions due to the laying of land mines, localized banditry by armed groups, the destruction of bridges and the deterioration of road surfaces.

The country's three main railway systems, which link the coast to provinces in the interior (and in the case of the Benguela railway continues eastward to Zaire and Zambia), are at a virtual standstill. Freight traffic on the railways was only 135,000 tons in 1994, compared with 9.3 mn tons in 1973.

Other basic infrastructure such as power plants and electricity distribution lines, and water supply systems in rural and urban areas have also suffered damage and deterioration. Several provincial capitals and many smaller rural towns no longer have functioning systems for water and electricity supply, while wells have become inoperative in hundreds of villages.

Due to the disruption of transport infrastructure, Angola ceased to have a unified market. Domestic trade was largely confined to the capital and a few other geographically separated enclaves linked together only by air transport. One year after the

Angola's social indicators, 1994

POPULATION	
Population (mn)	12.7
Population requiring humanitarian assistance (mn)	2.7
Internally displaced population (mn)	1.25
Refugees in neighbouring countries	300,000
Number of amputees	70,000
DEVELOPMENT	
GDP per capita ($) (a)	396
HDI rank (b)	155
HEALTH	
Infant mortality (0-1 years: per 1,000 live births)	195
Child mortality (1-5 years: per 1,000 live births)	320
Maternal mortality (per 100,000 live births)	1,500
Life expectancy (years)	46
Access to health services (%; 1993)	30
Access to safe water (%; 1993)	41
Access to sanitation (%; 1993)	19
% of budget allocated to health (1995)	2.8
EDUCATION	
Adult literacy rate (%)	42.5
Primary school enrolment rate (%; 1992)	46
% of budget allocated to education	4.4

a. At average official exchange rate. b. UNDP Human Development Index, ranking among 173 countries, in 1995. Angola fell to 164th position.

Sources: *Instituto Nacional de Estatística; UN Unit for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance; UNHCR; UNDP Human Development Report 1994; UNICEF, Relatório sobre a situação de criança de Angola; Ministry of Finance General State Budget.*

ANGOLA: ECONOMIC INDICATORS

	1985	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993	1994
GDP at market prices (NKz bn)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	800	3,890	31,510	679,510
Real GDP growth (%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	3.3	-25.0	8.6
Inflation (year on year, %)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	176	496	1,838	972
Merchandise exports ($ mn)	2,301	2,492	3,014	3,884	3,449	3,833	2,901	3,002
Merchandise imports ($ mn)	1,401	1,372	1,338	1,578	1,347	1,988	1,463	1,533
Balance of services ($ mn)	-726	-1,621	-1,804	-2,464	-2,710	-2,682	-2,272	-2,410
Current account ($ mn)	195	-469	-132	-235	-580	-735	-669	-872
Overall balance of payments ($ mn)	-6	-923	-930	-1,250	-1,500	-1,138	-1,501	-1,294
Total external debt ($ bn)	2.7	n.a.	n.a.	8.0	8.5	9.5	9.7	11.2
Debt service ratio (to exports):								
before rescheduling & arrears (%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	41.1	60.9	45.5	59.5	62.4
after rescheduling & arrears (%)	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	9.9	18.3	11.3	16.1	21.3
Crude oil production ('000 barrels/day)	232	451	453	473	497	549	503	556
Diamond exports (official only, '000 carats)	744	1,013	1,276	1,241	955	1,395	295	517
Food production per capita (1979-81 = 100)	90.6	87.9	83.6	81.5	82.5	82.4	78.6	64.6
Exchange rate (official; average NKz per $)	30	30	30	30	59	500	4,903	152,788

Sources: Banco Nacional de Angola; Instituto Nacional de Estatística; Ministry of Planning; FAO

peace accords, air transport is still the only sure way for people or goods to reach several cities in the interior.

The fall in domestic production and tax revenue (outside the oil sector), along with high levels of military expenditure, a growing debt burden and attempts by the government to cushion the drop in urban living standards with price subsidies, resulted in serious macroeconomic imbalances. Big budget deficits were financed by printing money, which stoked inflation. From the late 1980s, both the current account and the overall balance of payments went into permanent deficit despite high oil exports. The country has built up one of the heaviest debt burdens in the world (see page 26).

The intensity of the war resulted in a 25 per cent decline in real gross domestic product in 1993, and this was only partially made up by an 8.6 per cent rise in GDP in 1994. According to IMF estimates, the budget deficit was equivalent to 23 per cent of GDP in 1994. The balance of payments deficit widened to a record $872 mn, about 20 per cent of GDP, in 1994. The rapid growth in money supply, resulting mainly from central bank credits to finance the budget deficit, raised inflation in Luanda to 1,838 per cent in the year to December 1993. There was a slight improvement in 1994, with inflation declining to 972 per cent in the year to December. But by August 1995 inflation had soared to 2,040 per cent.

Against this background, the value of the national currency has been falling at a breathtaking rate on the now-tolerated parallel market — losing 99.5 per cent of its value between 1991 and 1994. A new currency, known as the "readjusted kwanza" (Kzr), was introduced in July, with one readjusted kwanza equivalent to 1,000 previous "new kwanzas" (Nkz). The slide in the value of the currency has continued, however: from about Kzr2,000 to the dollar at the beginning of July, the parallel market exchange rate had dipped to Kzr8,500 to the dollar by the end of September, equivalent to a devaluation of around 75 per cent in just three months.

Macroeconomic reform

The government took the first steps towards economic reform in 1987 when it announced a programme of "economic and financial cleansing" (*saneamento económico e financeiro*, SEF). Few concrete measures were implemented, however, until 1990 when the government announced an "action programme" (PAG) to correct internal and external disequilibria and to shift from centralized planning to a market-based economy.

Under the PAG, the government changed the country's currency (in September 1990), tried, unsuccessfully, to rein in money supply, abandoned the fixed official exchange rate (which had remained unchanged since 1977), abolished rationing and freed most prices, and opened up both foreign and domestic trade to private competition. In addition, the government took steps to restructure the banking system, legalizing private commercial banks, and initiated a programme to reform the large parastatal sector. By the end of 1992 many small state companies had been sold off.

But it proved extraordinarily difficult for the government to restore macroeconomic stability, especially after the resumption of the war in 1992. The renewed conflict, apart from causing unprecedented damage and a steep fall in GDP, diverted the government's energy from economic policy-making to the more immediate requirements of a fight for survival. Nonetheless, a new reform programme, the *Programa Economico e Social* (PES), was introduced in 1994. Under the PES, the government strived to reverse the fall in GDP, reduce the budget deficit and monetary growth and bring down the rate of inflation. A floating official exchange rate was introduced in an attempt to achieve convergence between the parallel and official rates.

Despite some modest improvements in economic performance in 1994 (a cut in the inflation rate and a partial recovery in GDP), the PES fell victim to the adverse environment of the continuing war, weak commitment to reform in some parts of

the government and a breakdown in controls over public expenditure. There was growing concern, within government and in the donor community, about the lack of transparency in public finances, which resulted in a parallel system of financing and expenditure developing alongside the approved budget, outside the control of the finance ministry.

To enable parts of the government to keep on importing (against a background of mounting external arrears and difficulties in obtaining normal trade financing), the state oil company SONANGOL obtained external credit lines, mortgaging future oil production to provide security for creditors and bypassing the debt management controls of the central bank, the Banco Nacional de Angola (BNA). While servicing these credit lines with oil deliveries, the company stopped paying a large part of its taxes to the Treasury, resulting in a steep fall in government revenue, which comes mainly from the oil companies. Partly as a result of these developments, 58 per cent of government spending in 1994 was "outside the framework of Treasury accounts," according to official sources.

The value of the national currency has been falling at a breathtaking rate on the now- tolerated parallel market.

In January 1995, President José Eduardo dos Santos appointed Mr. Augusto da Silva Tomás as the new finance minister and gave him responsibility for designing and coordinating a new reform programme. The new PES as approved by the National Assembly and talks on further macroeconomic stabilization measures were held in July when Mr. Tomás visited the IMF and the World Bank in Washington.

Under the new PES, the government has already taken radical measures to ease the burden of price subsidies, which accounted for

Donors pledge $993 mn in humanitarian and development aid

Giving a major boost to Angola's recovery efforts, donors pledged $993 mn for rehabilitation, reconstruction and humanitarian assistance at a 25-26 September conference held in Brussels. The pledges, which exceeded the $861 mn requested by Angola, underscored the importance attached by the international community to buttressing the peace process with measures that help revive production at grassroots level, restore normalcy to devastated local communities and facilitate the reintegration of displaced people, refugees and demobilized soldiers returning to their areas of origin. Total commitments could eventually exceed this figure, as some donors, including Germany, Italy and the UK, were yet to announce details of their contributions.

Opened by Belgian Prime Minister Jean-Luc De Haene, the conference was organized by the Angolan government and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) and hosted by the European Commission. Both President José Eduardo dos Santos and UNITA leader Jonas Malheiro Savimbi attended the opening session and promised to work together to consolidate the peace process. In what was only their third meeting since the Lusaka Protocol was signed on 20 November 1994, their presence showed a "sincere determination to carry through to the end the peace process," said Maître Alioune Blondin Beye, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General.

"We are opening new perspectives for peace and reconciliation amongst all Angolans," President dos Santos declared at the opening session. "It is only with stable political and social conditions that we can establish on solid foundations a really legitimate state and a new economic order." Mr. Savimbi assured donors that "if there are sceptics here who think I'm going to go back to war, I am telling them 'no'. I am here to say I will never again take the road of war."

Consolidated humanitarian appeal, 1995 ($ mn)

	Amount required in 1995	Shortfall submitted for funding
Emergency assistance	176.8	118.2
Demobilization and reintegration of troops	92.4	92.4
De-mining	12.4	11.1
Total	**281.5**	**221.7**

Source: Government of Angola, First Roundtable Conference of Donors, Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme, 25-26 September 1995, Brussels

Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation, 1996-97 ($ mn)

	1996	1997	Total	Appeal to donors
Agriculture, livestock and fisheries	89.2	55.5	144.6	133.4
Small and micro-enterprises	82.9	82.8	165.7	147.2
Social sectors	111.4	68.5	179.9	178.0
Basic infrastructure	116.5	56.2	172.7	166.7
Institutional support projects	25.3	19.0	44.3	14.1
Total cost	**425.3**	**282.0**	**707.3**	**639.3**

Source: Republic of Angola, Roundtable Conference of Donors, Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation Programme

Donors are in no doubt, however, that without rapid improvements in social and economic conditions the peace process could be endangered. As UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth put it: "Economic policy and the consolidation of peace are mutually interdependent. Failure on either front severely jeopardizes success on the other. A failure to achieve economic growth and a broad improvement in living standards would fuel social tensions and the risk of renewed war. And a return to war would shatter hopes for economic revival."

The Brussels appeal had two components. The first, to which donors contributed $207 mn, covers emergency humanitarian assistance, land mine clearance and support for the demobilization and reintegration of soldiers into civilian society. The second part of the appeal is a Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation aimed at rebuilding communities shattered by the war. It is made up of 18 provincial programmes and a series of national support projects, costed at $707 mn over two years, with the government contributing about $68 mn and appealing to donors for $639 mn. Donors exceeded expectations by pledging $786 mn.

The programme will be overseen by provincial and municipal coordinating committees involving both NGOs and government bodies, and will be managed at national level by a coordination unit to be set up in the Ministry of Planning with support from UNDP. The National Coordination Unit will act as secretariat to a Project Approval Committee, to be established jointly by the government, donors and UNDP, to also monitor specific projects. Some donors will also channel their support for the programme through a special UNDP-managed trust fund.

almost 18 per cent of budget expenditure in 1994. On 13 June, it raised the price of petrol, which then cost less than one-seventh of a US cent per litre, by 13,900 per cent. By mid-August, there had been four more increases, raising the price of petrol to Kzr1,455 (then about 25 US cents) a litre. In another move, the government has set up a technical commission to try to restore transparency to public finances by regularizing the financial inter-relationships between SONANGOL, the Treasury and the BNA. New procedures, including an "oil account" at the BNA, were due to take effect in September.

Schools were destroyed, damaged or looted during the war. In most provinces of the interior, 80 to 90 per cent of the schools have closed.

The government is now designing a "shadow" adjustment programme, with technical advice from the IMF and a former Portuguese finance minister. The programme will provide a basis for formal IMF monitoring and, if all goes well, will prepare the ground for eventual agreements with the IMF on an Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility and with the World Bank on a structural adjustment loan. An IMF agreement would also open the way to debt restructuring, which will be another crucial precondition for sustained economic recovery.

During the discussions in Washington in July, the government reaffirmed its commitment to more rigorous fiscal measures, tighter monetary controls and a flexible exchange rate policy in order to create a stable macroeconomic framework. The government is committed to reducing the fiscal deficit to 13.5 per cent of GDP in 1995 and 10.5 per cent in 1996 and aims to reduce the inflation rate to about 80 per cent in 1996.

There are three factors, however, which may make macroeconomic stabilization frustratingly difficult to achieve in the short-to-medium term:

- the likelihood that military expenditure will remain at a high level due to the global incorporation of UNITA troops into the armed forces during a transitional phase prior to gradual, selective demobilization;
- the social and political constraints on tough adjustment measures that risk further antagonizing a desperate population and undermining efforts to consolidate the peace process and rebuild political stability; and

One of the world's most heavily indebted countries

Some Western critics of aid to Angola have asked why such a large oil producer needs international help to finance its recovery. But this ignores two crucial facts: Angola has a crushing debt burden which oil exports alone cannot service; the non-oil sectors of the economy have contracted to such an extent that Angola is now one of the poorest countries in the world. Without substantial debt reduction, Angola has no hope of rebuilding its economy.

Between 1986 and 1994, Angola's external debt quadrupled from $2.8 bn to $11.2 bn. Four factors fueled this surge: huge credits to finance military imports; loans for large investment projects, such as the 520-mw hydroelectric dam at Capanda on the River Kwanza; a build-up of arrears compounded by debt rescheduling agreements that capitalized interest due; and costly short-to-medium term borrowing, guaranteed by future oil deliveries, to finance essential imports in the absence of normal trade financing.

While the debt burden has been growing, Angola's capacity to service it has been shrinking. Although oil production has continued to rise, low world oil prices and the decline in Angola's official diamond exports have resulted in a fall in exports of goods and services since 1980. In the 1990-94 period alone, exports fell from about $3.9 bn to $3 bn.

The steep decline in the non-oil sectors has also contributed to the sharp fall in real gross domestic product. As a result, the ratio of external debt to GDP has climbed from 45 per cent in 1986 to 261 per cent in 1994. This compares to a World Bank projection of 83 per cent for all sub-Saharan Africa in 1994.

Similarly, the ratio of debt to exports has been rising steadily, reaching 358 per cent in 1994. This is substantially higher than the 255 per cent projected by the Bank for all sub-Saharan Africa for 1994, making Angola one of the most heavily indebted countries in the world's most debt-burdened region.

Given these trends, Angola has been unable to honour fully its debt service obligations, resulting in an ever larger stock of external arrears. Rising from $190 mn in 1986 to $6.5 bn in 1994, arrears constituted 58 per cent of Angola's external debt by the end of 1994. The arrears include almost $1.4 bn of interest arrears.

Due to these arrears, Angola has had to resort to oil-guaranteed credit lines to finance imports on a hand-to-mouth basis. Under the contracts for these credit lines, oil deliveries are earmarked for creditors and the proceeds are paid into special escrow accounts. According to Angola's central bank, the Banco

- the time-lags before the restoration of peace and economic reforms can generate a significant supply response, given the extent of de-mining, resettlement and infrastructural rehabilitation that will be required.

Incorporating UNITA troops into the Angolan army will result in a force of 180,000 men, the largest army in sub-Saharan Africa.

Under an agreement reached by the government and UNITA in the framework of the Joint Commission, the body overseeing implementation of the Lusaka Protocol, UNITA troops are to be incorporated into the Forças Armadas de Angola (FAA) in order to avoid the hasty demobilization of troops into a depressed economy. This is widely recognized to be a prudent policy which will help reduce the risks of former troops resorting to banditry and crime — as began to happen during the post-Bicesse period.

The downside is that this will create an army likely to number at least 180,000 men, more than any other army in sub-Saharan Africa. As employment conditions permit, the government intends to reduce the size of the armed forces to 90,000. This will still leave Angola with the largest armed forces in sub-Saharan Africa except for South Africa. The costs of paying and supplying such a large military establishment, especially during the phase following global incorporation, will weigh heavily on the government budget.

After his July meetings with the IMF and the Bank in Washington, Mr. Tomás recognized that "there are no stabilization programmes without sacrifices during their initial stage." But in conditions where much of the population is barely surviving there is not much room for further sacrifice. The government narrowly averted a 21 September general strike in the capital by promising subsidies on essential goods (implying a partial reversal of price liberalization), as well as improvements in public transport and a hike in the minimum wage.

The third constraining factor on the adjustment programme is the likely delay in obtaining a supply response. One of the major structural shifts resulting from the war has been the steep drop in the agricultural labour force relative to the total population. The removal of land mines from hundreds of rural feeder roads and paths, as well as the major trunk roads, is likely to take years, holding up the return of *deslocados*, the recovery of farming and the revival of rural marketing in some areas.

The rehabilitation programme

Despite the difficulties, significant progress can be made in many parts of the country. The government has designed a framework for rehabilitation at community level, the Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation. Donors provided strong support for the programme at an international donors' conference in Brussels in September, along with continuing humanitarian assistance and support for de-mining and the reintegration of demobilized soldiers into civilian society (see page 25).

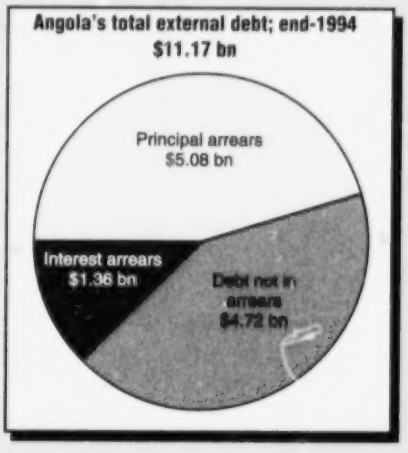
The programme, premised on the notion that the revival of local communities is a critical element in the process of economic recovery and social stabilization, has three main areas of concentration: the revival of production, employment and incomes; the rehabilitation of basic infrastructure; and the restoration of critical social services. A fourth area is the strengthening of capacity for management of the rehabilitation and recovery process by provincial and local governments and NGOs, and at the national level.

In its first area, the programme has two components: one focusing on rehabilitating agriculture, livestock raising, forestry

Nacional de Angola, oil-guaranteed debt amounted to about $2.5 bn, or 22 per cent of total external debt, at the end of 1994.

Since most of this debt has a short maturity and very high interest rates, the short-term servicing requirements are extremely onerous. As a result, the average debt service paid by Angola has exceeded $1 bn a year despite the non-payment of almost all debt service due on older loans contracted without oil guarantees. Scheduled debt service for 1995 is $1.62 bn, or 43 per cent of expected exports of $3.79 bn.

To date, Angola has benefited little from debt relief. There has been no rescheduling with the Paris Club of official bilateral Western creditors since 1989, and no rescheduling with Russia (the largest creditor, accounting for 44 per cent of Angola's total external debt) since the same year. There have been bilateral rescheduling arrangements with some key creditors since 1989, including Brazil, Portugal and Spain early in 1995. But these have been on non-concessional terms with no element of debt relief. Only Denmark and the Netherlands have written off debts, totalling $90 mn, less than 1 per cent of Angola's total external debt.



Given its current debt profile and low-income status, Angola should be eligible for concessional debt restructuring under the Naples terms. With per capita income of $381 in 1994, Angola is well below the $500 ceiling of eligibility for Naples and also meets World Bank criteria for severe indebtedness. Another element in an eventual debt package might be donor aid for the buy-back of some short-term and commercial debt on the secondary market, where Angolan debt currently trades for under 20 per cent of its face value.

The critical ingredients for solving the debt crisis, however, will be the reduction of bilateral debt and the mobilization of concessional balance of payments support so that Angola can free itself from dependence on costly, oil-guaranteed credit lines and raise imports to a level compatible with the requirements of economic recovery.

and fisheries; the other on reviving small and micro-scale private manufacturing, crafts, construction, trade and other services.

In the social sectors, the programme includes a series of mutually reinforcing actions designed to restore basic education and primary health care, and to help vulnerable groups like mine victims and wounded war veterans to secure their future through training, employment and income-generating activities. The programme focuses on the first six years of education through rehabilitating schools, supplying materials, providing non-salary incentives to teachers, and reviving teacher training, literacy programmes and vocational training.

In health, the accent is on restoring primary health care because of the urgent need to control epidemics and revive preventive programmes, such as vaccination campaigns, child and maternal health programmes and health education. The rehabilitation of basic infrastructure includes projects for roads and bridges, small-scale water and sanitation systems, housing and small-scale energy production and distribution systems.

With the support and participation of the government, UNITA, the private sector, NGOs and the international community, as well as the beneficiary communities themselves, the programme can bring tangible benefits to the majority of the population in a relatively short period of time. By helping to increase the production of goods and services, it should also help the government to restore macroeconomic equilibrium.

In addition, the programme will be a critical factor in creating conditions at local level for the successful return of the *deslocados*, refugees and demobilized soldiers. Improvements in employment, incomes, food security and welfare in communities across the country will help to stabilize Angola's fractured society and ensure that it does not lurch backwards into renewed conflict. ■

Oil and diamonds dominate the Angolan economy

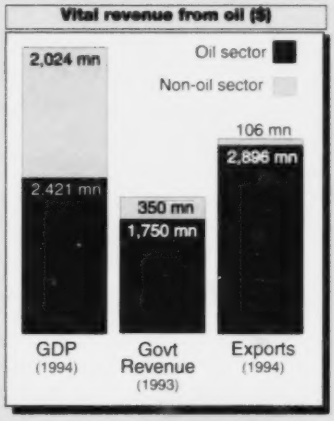
The rapid growth of Angola's oil industry has contrasted starkly with the devastation and decline suffered by the rest of the economy, and has left Angola almost entirely dependent on oil for export earnings and government revenue.

Located mainly offshore and thus beyond the reach of anti-government forces during the war, the oil industry largely escaped destruction or disruption. The only exception was the shutdown of on-shore oilfields and some nearby offshore fields following UNITA's occupation of the Soyo area in north-western Angola in 1993 and 1994. Due to the occupation, oil production fell by 8 per cent in 1993, but output resumed its upward trend in 1994, reaching a record 556,000 barrels a day (b/d). By July 1995, production was up to 637,000 b/d.

Since 1982, Angola's oil production has risen fivefold, making the country by far the most important producer in sub-Saharan Africa after Nigeria. Most Angolan oil is a light crude with a low sulphur content, and trades at prices close to those for the UK's North Sea Brent. The industry's growth is set to continue, with production expected to rise to some 780,000 b/d by 1998, as international oil companies make large investments to explore for new deposits and to bring newly discovered fields into production.

Development expenditure alone has been running at more than $400 mn a year since 1989. The largest investments are being made by the Chevron-led consortium which holds the title to the offshore Cabinda concession and by groups led by Elf and Texaco off the coast of Soyo. Since the early 1990s, exploration has moved further out to new deep-water zones, using frontier technology developed in areas like the North Sea. So far, exploration rights have been awarded for four of 17 demarcated deep-water blocks, and several more of these blocks are expected to be awarded soon.

Combined with the decline of the non-oil economy, the growth of the oil sector has left Angola exceptionally dependent on this one industry. While agriculture's share of gross domestic product fell from 24 per cent in 1991 to only 12 per cent in 1994, the oil sector's contribution to GDP rose from 18 to 54 per cent in the same period.



As non-oil tax revenues fell, the government became overwhelmingly dependent on the taxes and royalties from oil companies. By 1993, these accounted for over 83 per cent of total government revenue and the oil sector accounted for no less than 96.5 per cent of total merchandise exports by 1994.

The other two main export commodities have traditionally been coffee and diamonds. The coffee industry, which until 1974 was the fourth largest in the world (after Brazil, Colombia and Côte d'Ivoire), has practically disappeared. Production is now only 2 per cent of what it was in the early 1970s due to the flight of Portuguese commercial coffee farmers at independence, the difficulties faced by the state companies that took over their estates and then the disruption wrought by the war in the coffee-growing regions. The government has recently been privatizing state coffee estates in the hope of reviving the industry.

The diamond industry has also suffered severe disruption. As a result of UNITA's occupation of the most valuable mining sites in the Cuango valley in the north-eastern province of Lunda-Norte when the war resumed at the end of 1992, official diamond exports slumped from 1.4 mn carats in 1992 to 295,000 carats in 1993, followed by a modest recovery to 517,000 carats in 1994.

Many of the mining areas are being exploited by armed gangs of *garimpeiros*, illegal diggers who sell their stones to smugglers, most of whom operate from across the border in neighbouring Zaire. The Lunda-Norte and Lunda-Sul provinces, where most of the illegal mining occurs, have become a magnet for adventurers and gangsters, turning the northeast of the country into a "wild west" of violent struggles for control over diamond sources.

In a 7 September speech, President José Eduardo dos Santos deplored the fact that while state revenue from diamond sales is now only $60 mn a year, "diamond buyers in Europe estimate that sales of Angolan diamonds on the informal market amount to $340 to 400 mn a year, five times state earnings." Very little of these illegal earnings remain in the country and contribute to broader development.

Nearly one land mine for every Angolan

Approximately 10 million "silent killers" still threaten the country's future

"Mines may be described as fighters that never miss, strike blindly, do not carry weapons openly and go on killing long after hostilities are ended. In short, mines are the greatest violators of international humanitarian law, practicing blind terrorism."

— International Committee of the Red Cross

There are about 10 mn land mines in Angola, roughly one for every Angolan. Laid over the past 25 years by various armies, both Angolan and foreign, these mines have taken a terrible toll in human life. The UN says that at least 1.5 per cent of the population has suffered injury from mines or unexploded ordnance, and that about 70,000 Angolans have had limbs amputated because of mine incidents — the highest number in the world relative to the population and perhaps in absolute terms as well.

"These mines are silent killers, eternally vigilant sentries who never sleep," warns the Angolan government in its Programme of Community Rehabilitation and National Reconciliation. Although the war has ended, the land mines remain, threatening the life and welfare of millions of Angolans as well as the personnel of UN peace-keeping forces (UNAVEM-III) and humanitarian agencies. The presence of land mines on roads, farmland and around formerly besieged cities is also one of the main obstacles to economic recovery, the normalization of life and the return of displaced people and refugees to their areas of origin.

Still besieged by mines

With roads and bridges still mined, overland transport is dangerous or impossible in many areas, preventing resumption of internal trade and agricultural marketing. In many parts of the country, isolated enclaves of economic activity are still linked only by costly air transport.

Several cities besieged during the war are surrounded by an almost impenetrable ring of mines. In the northern city of Malange over 170,000 people cannot move beyond a small radius because of the defensive minefields that have not been cleared. Only a small part of the "green belt" that supplied the city with the bulk of its food can be cultivated, leaving the residents dependent for their survival on food aid despite their desire to resume farming.

De-mining, therefore, is one of the highest priorities in any viable strategy for rehabilitation and recovery. But it is much more difficult and expensive to detect and remove land mines than it is to lay them. The challenge is daunting, not just because of the huge number of mines, but also because there are few records of where the various armies laid them.

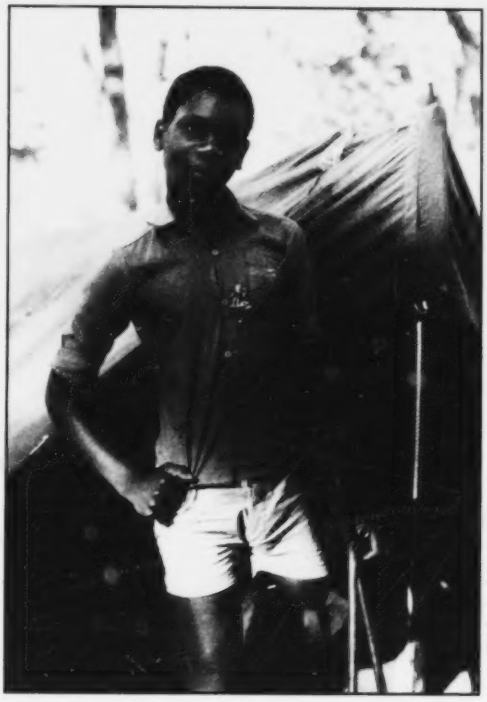
In a report to the UN Security Council on 17 July, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali regretted that "the pace of mine clearance has remained slow." Most of the de-mining has been undertaken by a handful of specialized non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Norwegian People's Aid has been clearing mines from the strategic trunk road that runs eastward from Luanda to Malange, while the German organization Cap Anamur has been engaged in de-mining in parts of the south-west. Two British NGOs, the Halo Trust and the Mines Advisory Group (MAG), have been de-mining in and around the eastern cities of Kuito and Luena.

About 70,000 Angolans have lost limbs due to mine explosions; thousands more will suffer amputations.

Since the deployment of UNAVEM peace-keepers, some engineering units have begun de-mining along key trunk roads and around the quartering areas being set up for UNITA troops. And recently, both the government's Forças Armadas de Angola (FAA) and UNITA have supplied troops for de-mining activities in cooperation with UNAVEM, the UN Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit (UCAH) and NGOs.

Strategic planning for a long-term programme of de-mining has been spearheaded by UCAH's Central Mine Action Office, set up in March 1994. In conjunction with the government, UNAVEM and NGOs, it has designed a strategy that has five basic components:

- establishment of a specialized government authority, the Instituto Nacional de Acção sobre as Minas (INAM), with overall responsibility for all aspects of the land mine problem;
- mine surveying, demarcation of mined areas and establishment of a national databank;
- a mine awareness education campaign, which will be a critical factor in reducing deaths and injuries, particularly among returning refugees and displaced persons who do not have local knowledge of the mines planted in their home areas and are thus at special risk;
- training Angolan de-miners, through a Central Mine Action Training School, which is being established in Luanda with branches in some provinces; and
- mine clearance in top priority areas, beginning with the most important trunk roads, prime agricultural areas and the main areas to which displaced persons and refugees are expected to return. ■



UNHCR / A. HOLBEN

Reactivating development in LDCs

The position of the least developed countries has worsened since 1990

By **Margaret A. Novicki**

Economic conditions in most of the world's least developed countries (LDCs) have deteriorated rather than improved over the past five years, senior government officials were told in New York at a high-level UN meeting in late September and early October. Having failed to meet aid targets set in the 1990 Programme of Action for the LDCs, donors recommitted themselves to providing 0.15 per cent of their gross national product (GNP) in aid for the poorest nations.

Attended by 30 government ministers and other senior officials, the meeting conducted a mid-term review of the implementation of the Programme. That programme was adopted at a major conference in Paris at which donor countries agreed to a partnership with the LDCs to support their particular development needs.

UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali told the New York meeting that over the past five years "the position of most LDCs has actually worsened" because of "insufficient attention to development priorities and excessive military expenditures," as well as a "heavy debt burden" and a "clear lack of external support."

The overall number of LDCs has increased from 41 to 48 since the Paris meeting, and only Botswana has managed to graduate from the LDC ranks since the early 1970s. A document prepared for the meeting by the UN Economic Commission for Africa warned that in Africa's 33 LDCs, "general poverty has accentuated and intensified."

Unfulfilled expectations

These sombre statistics provided the backdrop to two weeks of intense — and sometimes tense — negotiations between the LDCs and their development partners. In the end, participants agreed on a declaration and recommendations aimed at reactivating development in the LDCs over the next five years.

"We have seen a willingness to focus on the least developed countries both in regard to financial measures and in the way development programmes are being implemented. We should build on this momentum and continue to pursue these trends," said Mrs. Kari Nordheim-Larsen, chairperson of the meeting and Norway's Minister of Development Cooperation.

There was, however, a sense of unfulfilled expectations among the LDCs as the meeting drew to a close: "When it came to new measures of strengthening existing measures, a sense of constraint prevailed over the atmosphere of good will and understanding," said Ambassador Reaz Rahman of Bangladesh, coordinator of the LDCs.

The Paris Programme of Action acknowledged that the main responsibility for achieving economic development lay with the LDCs themselves, while also calling upon the donor community to do its part. But, as the Secretary-General noted, "In 1993, the financial flows to LDCs actually declined in absolute terms by more than $1.2 bn. Only four countries now meet the agreed target: they are Denmark, the Netherlands, Norway and Sweden."

The UN Secretary-General addressing the LDC meeting, flanked by UNCTAD Secretary-General Rubens Ricupero, and Norway's Minister of Development Cooperation Kari Nordheim-Larsen.

Addressing the negative trend in official development assistance (ODA), the single most important source of financing for LDCs, participants reconfirmed the targets and commitments for aid set out in Paris and recommended that priority continue to be given to LDCs within UN operational activities.

They also emphasized the importance of ensuring adequate funding of the multilateral financial institutions, which were invited to explore new ways of helping to support LDCs. Participants encouraged the Bretton Woods institutions to develop a comprehensive approach to alleviate the multilateral debt problems of LDCs through the "flexible implementation of existing instruments and new mechanisms where necessary."

The meeting also provided the first opportunity for extensive examination of LDC trade issues since the final approval of the Uruguay Round agreement at Marrakesh in early 1994. The final Uruguay document noted concerns that the LDCs "may suffer erosion of preferential margins in many of their exports to major markets and a possible consequential loss in export market shares and export earnings" as a result of the Uruguay Round. In addition, net food-importing LDCs, of which there are many in Africa, may face higher import bills.

Participants agreed that LDCs should be compensated for their continued marginalization in world trade with a commitment to assist them both financially and technically to implement provisions of the Marrakesh Declaration and ministerial decisions in favour of the LDCs. The meeting called for improved technical assistance in order to help LDCs to take advantage of the new trading environment and to strengthen their capacity to participate fully in the World Trade Organization.

Norway announced a contribution of $10 mn to the UN Development Programme's new Trust Fund for Good Governance, earmarked for the LDCs. It also offered to host a conference in 1996 to transform into action the "20/20 proposal" — allocating at least 20 per cent of foreign aid and 20 per cent of national budgets of developing countries to social priorities — which was one of the main outcomes of the March 1995 Summit World Social Summit in Copenhagen. ■

GCA links economic, political reform

By ***Ernest Harsch***

Better governance will play a central role in accelerating Africa's economic reform process, rooting out corruption, integrating the continent's economies and preventing further devastation by wars, participants stressed at a series of meetings held by the Global Coalition for Africa (GCA) in Accra, Ghana, on 7-9 June. Members of three GCA sub-committees reviewed many of the central themes that featured at the Coalition's 27-28 November plenary meeting in Maastricht, the Netherlands.

Launched in 1991, following a major conference in Maastricht, the GCA is a high-level, informal forum for policy dialogue among African leaders and officials of donor-country and international organizations. It is co-chaired by President Ketumile Masire of Botswana, former World Bank President Robert McNamara and Netherlands Development Cooperation Minister Jan Pronk.

Moral pressure

One of the GCA's aims from the beginning has been to focus on issues that are under dispute or that have received insufficient attention. Since the Coalition is not itself an implementing agency, "we put on moral pressure," GCA Executive Secretary Boubakar Diaby-Ouattara stated shortly after the Accra meetings.

Some of the greatest challenges involve coordinating political and economic reform. Thus far, the results of Ghana's parallel reform processes are "debatable," said that country's then Minister of Finance Kwesi Botchwey, who opened the meetings and chaired the sub-committee on economic reform policies. He wondered whether donor countries themselves consistently adhere to a two-track approach: "Are donor attitudes consistent the world over, or do they turn a blind eye to transgressions against democracy when the market is large and the spoils irresistible?" he asked.

Whatever the difficulties, meeting participants agreed democracy is essential for Africa's progress. There was an overall consensus that while free and fair elections are important, they constitute only a small part of Africa's political transition. For democracy to be sustainable, there is a need to create and reform institutions, ensure the neutrality of the security forces, strengthen state capacities and tackle problems of poverty, unemployment and inadequate social services.

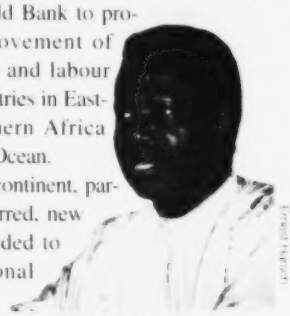
Touching on another aspect of governance, Mr. Peter Eigen, chairman of Transparency International, reported on the efforts of his non-governmental organization (NGO) to combat corruption. His report and the discussions addressed not only corruption within African states, but also the role of the endemic "grand corruption" practiced by Northern exporting enterprises in sapping African economies.

The meetings pursued earlier GCA discussions on conflict management. In addition, a report on a joint GCA and Organization of African Unity (OAU) meeting examined post-conflict military demobilization, noting that such efforts are usually more complex and costly and take longer than initially anticipated.

Trade and regional integration

The Uruguay Round trade agreements pose new challenges for Africa in the international marketplace, participants agreed. But going beyond debates about the possible losses that Africa may incur, they focused on how African countries can best respond to the new realities. They urged African countries to strengthen coordination among their representatives to the World Trade Organization in order to enhance their bargaining power.

Without neglecting world markets, participants also argued that African countries would find it worthwhile to channel their production primarily towards domestic markets and neighbouring or regional African markets. One new venture is the Cross-Border Initiative, launched by the African Development Bank (ADB), European Commission, International Monetary Fund and World Bank to promote freer movement of goods, capital and labour among 14 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean.



Boubakar Diaby-Ouattara, GCA Executive Secretary

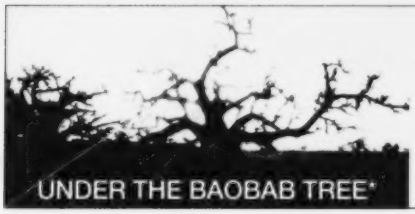
Across the continent, participants concurred, new efforts are needed to advance regional cooperation and integration. They recommended that each country set up a Regional Integration Policy Council, that regional institutions improve their collaboration and that continental organizations such as the OAU, ADB and UN Economic Commission for Africa better coordinate their efforts to build the African Economic Community envisaged in the 1991 Abuja Treaty.

The sub-committees examined a range of other questions including population, AIDS and the environment. Given Africa's weak levels of domestic savings and private investment, it was felt that special attention needs to be given to mobilizing domestic resources. A workshop organized by Canada and several NGOs urged greater attention to gender issues, noting that after more than a decade of structural adjustment in Africa, women's living conditions have deteriorated.

The GCA's Agricultural Development Strategy Initiative, based on two conferences of agriculture ministers in Western and Central Africa and in Eastern and Southern Africa, was seen as a way to help countries formulate comprehensive agricultural strategies. While agriculture is the pre-eminent economic sector, it still does not receive the priority and support it deserves, whether in budgetary allocations, infrastructure development, credit and marketing arrangements or the delivery of technological inputs. Participants agreed that governments should closely consult farmers in drawing up strategies and give special support to women farmers, who often account for the bulk of production. ■

Next issue: GCA special report

The next issue of *Africa Recovery* will feature an extensive report on the Global Coalition for Africa's November plenary. Known as Maastricht II, it was attended by numerous donor and African delegations, including nine African heads of state or government, and was marked by lively and frank discussions on governance, democracy, non-governmental organizations, economic reform, multilateral debt, donor conditionality and a range of other topics.



Our man in Beijing

By Djibril Diallo

UNDER THE BAOBAB TREE*

Being a man at the Beijing Fourth World Conference on Women was quite an experience. First, some Chinese made us feel out of place: "What are you doing here? Don't you know this is a women's conference?", I was asked at times. I was also the object of inquisitive looks. Nothing hostile about them. They just found it strange for a man to attend a women's meeting.

There was hardly such a feeling inside the conference, though, whether at the Beijing International Convention Centre, where the official proceedings took place, or at the NGO Forum. There were male participants: journalists, NGO representatives, religious leaders and human rights activists. It is just that we were a tiny minority — no more than 2,000 out of a total of nearly 50,000 participants.

In fact, the question of whether Beijing was a women's conference or a conference on women had been raised throughout its preparatory phase. The answer for the organizers was clear: it was the latter. The important thing was for men to try to look at the issues through the eyes of women. Some men felt lost or flustered. Some even tried to put together men-only workshops in Huairou. But they were a small minority. Most men I came across felt privileged to be part of history in the making.

The husband of Mrs. Gertrude Mongella, Secretary-General of the conference, sat through most plenary sessions in solidarity with his wife. Mr. Julius Nyerere, the former President of Tanzania, was among those who sprang from their chairs to give a warm standing ovation to Mrs. Mongella for her powerful opening remarks. Men were also present as security guards, volunteers and reporters. Some media organizations, correctly deciding to cover the conference as a mainstream news event, sent correspondents from their regional bureaus in Asia, many of whom happened to be male. In the past, stories on women's conferences, usually written by female reporters, appeared on the style pages, even when the writers normally filed hard-news stories.

As Mrs. Mongella has noted, what set Beijing apart from earlier conferences on women is that it was about partnerships between the sexes rather than confrontation or competition. After all, the historical movements against slavery, colonialism, torture and other forms of oppression have not been supported only by the victims. Similarly, it is important that men be mobilized to promote the empowerment and advancement of women.

The need for partnerships

The need for partnerships has been recognized in many development circles, leading to a gradual shift from "women in development" to "gender in development" over the past few years. Rosina Wiltshire, manager of UNDP's Gender in Development Programme, points out that her job is to ensure the equal participation of women and men in mainstream development activities.

This shift is intended to reflect the changing roles and status of women and men that are socially determined, rather than assigned on a biological basis. For example, in Africa women produce 80 per cent of the food consumed at home, yet it is usually men who own the land. To improve food security in the continent, it is therefore essential to involve men and not focus solely upon women farmers.

The important thing was for men to look at the issues through the eyes of women ... Most men I came across felt privileged to be a part of history in the making.

Another example is availability of credit for income-generating activities in poor areas. Lending only to women can unwittingly worsen their situation, because the money borrowed by women can end up in men's hands while the women are left with the responsibility of repayment. Loans need to be available, therefore, to both women and men.

That does not detract from the need to increase the availability of credit for women, as was emphasized in Beijing. Bangladesh's Grameen Bank was talked about quite a lot as a model for small-scale credit. Its founder, Professor Yunus, shared his experiences during a packed session chaired by Hillary Rodham Clinton, the US First Lady. The Grameen Bank lent some $400 mn to women in 1994 — some loans as small as one dollar. And they were amazingly good borrowers — up to 97 per cent of the loans were paid back, a much higher repayment percentage than for ordinary banks.

Some of these points are among the themes of this year's *Human Development Report*, which is examined elsewhere in this publication. Mahbub ul Haq, the architect of the report, likes to say that no country can develop itself if only half of its population is free. Women's rights are human rights.

That is why I wish there had been more men in Beijing, to enlarge the circle of gender sensitivity. At the same time, there must be a continuous process of looking for new and better ways to promote the advancement of women. As noted by UNDP Administrator James Gustave Speth in his statement to the conference: "For men who hold the reins of power there is a special responsibility."

Ratification of the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women is a must for all countries. National legislation in each country needs to be revised to give women equal protection under the law. The number of women ambassadors accredited to the UN — only seven at the moment — needs to be increased.

Conflict resolution is another area which could benefit from women's participation, a point stressed by the African First Ladies who were in Beijing. "Women are never included on peace negotiation teams," said Mrs. Rosine Soglo, Benin's First Lady. Amid cheers from participants, Mrs. Soglo added: "We are going to charter a plane to Burundi first, then to Rwanda and Somalia."

Tired of being left on the sidelines when millions of women are refugees or victims of genocide or rape, they resolved to mobilize other women across the continent to enhance their role as peace-makers. Revulsion against violence is a common feeling of women from developing countries. Mrs. Mongella once told *The New York Times*: "What benefit does the gun hold for women? No woman needs a gun. But give her a hoe or a water pump and she will make a change." ■

**The African Baobab is one of the world's hardiest trees, thriving in even the most arid environment. It is also the tree under which some Africans traditionally meet to decide issues of common concern.*

AFRICA AGENDA

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

10-13 April, Phoenix, Arizona, US: "Africa96" Conference on Business, Trade and Investment Opportunities organized by AMI Consultants; Tel: (602) 279-7278; Fax (602) 279-7703.

26 April - 11 May, Midrand, South Africa: UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) IX Meeting. Contact: K. Kousari in Geneva, Phone (41-22) 907-5800, Fax (41-22) 907-0043 or G. Kell in New York, Phone (212) 963-3817, Fax (212) 963-0027.

3-14 June, Istanbul, Turkey: The City Summit: The UN Conference on Human Settlements Habitat II. Contact: UN Centre for Human Settlements, Nairobi, Kenya, Phone (254-2) 623 033, Fax (254-2) 623 080, Email: Habitat2@unep.no

11 June, Washington, DC: InterAction Workshop on Assessment of PVO/NGO Partnerships in Africa. Contact: Lisa Freund Rosenblatt, Tel (202) 667-8227, Fax (202) 667-8236.

September, Harare, Zimbabwe: World Solar Summit. Contact: UNESCO in Paris, Phone (33-1) 4568-4078, Fax (33-1) 4065-9896.

30 September - 4 October, Geneva, Switzerland: World Aid '96, a Global Expo and Conference on International Relief. Contact Ralph Wright, Phone (1-703) 912-6861.

13-17 November, Rome, Italy: World Food Summit. Contact: World Food Summit Secretariat, Phone (396) 5225-2932, Fax (396) 5225-5249, Email: food-summit@fao.org

WHAT'S TAKEN PLACE

24-27 January, Johannesburg, South Africa: South Africa and Africa – Emerging Policy Frameworks: International workshop organized by the African Centre for Development and Strategic Studies (ACDESS.)

9 January 1996, Washington, DC: InterAction Workshop on USAID New Partnership Initiative and Private Voluntary Organizations (PVO)/NGO-Private Sector Collaboration in Africa. Contact: Lisa Freund Rosenblatt, Phone (202) 667-8227, Fax (202) 667-8236.

10-14 December, Kampala, Uganda: The 9th International Conference on AIDS and STDs in Africa. Contact: Uganda AIDS Commission, 30 Bombo Road, Box 10779, Kampala. Tel (256-41) 258-538, Fax (256-41) 258-173.

14 December, Madrid, Spain: Humanitarian Aid Summit. Contact UNICEF, Geneva, Tel (41-22) 791-0821, Fax (41-22) 791-0822 or UNICEF, New York, Phone (212) 326-7259, Fax (212) 326-7768.

28 November - 1 December, Kampala, Uganda: East African Trade Fair organized by UNIDO, the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa and the Uganda Investment Authority. Contact: UNIDO in Vienna, Phone (43-1) 21131-4866, Fax (43-1) 2309-8260.

17-20 October, Lusaka, Zambia: Techmart Africa. An investment and technology forum co-organized by UNIDO, COMESA and the Zambian government. Contact F.M. Machado: Phone (43-1) 21131-3693, Fax (43-1) 232156.

4-6 October, Washington, DC: Third Annual World Bank Conference on Effective Financing of Environmentally Sustainable Development. African Roundtable on 5 October. Contact (202) 473-9361, Fax (202) 522-3224.

11-12 September, Johannesburg, South Africa: Southern Africa Investment Summit. Contact Fiona Cowan, International Herald Tribune Conference Office: Fax (44-171) 836-0717.

28-29 July, Accra, Ghana: Workshop on Changing Employment Patterns and the Structure of Unemployment in Africa. Contact UN University, Tokyo,Tel (03) 3499-2811, Fax (03) 3499-2828.

AFRICA BOOKS

Bureaucrats in Business: The Economics and Politics of Government Ownership (World Bank, Washington, D.C. 1995; 346 pages; $24.95).

Food Aid: The Challenge and The Opportunity by H.W. Singer, John Wood and Tony Jennings, (Clarendon Press, UK, 1995, £10.95).

Food Scarcity and Famine: Assessment and Response by Helen Young (Oxfam Publishing, Oxford, UK; 1995; £5.95).

Household Food Security: Concepts, Indicators, Measurements - A Technical Review by Simon Maxwell and Timothy R. Frankenberger (UNICEF/IFAD, New York, £11.50).

Nigeria's Continuing Crisis: The Quest for a Democratic Order, Conflict Study 283/284, by Ian Campbell (Research Institute for the Study of Conflict and Terrorism, London, 1995; £15).

State Building and Democracy in Southern Africa: Botswana, Zimbabwe and South Africa by Pierre du Toit (US Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC, 1995; 384 pages; pb $19.95, hb $37.50).

The State of the World's Refugees: In Search of Solutions, (UNHCR, Oxford University Press, London; 1995; 264 pages).

Transitional Justice: How Emerging Democracies Reckon with Former Regimes, ed. Neil J. Kritz (US Institute of Peace Press, Washington, DC 1995; 672 pages; pb $40, hb $70).

Uganda: Adjustment with Growth, 1987-94, by Robert L. Sharer, Hema R. de Zoysa, and Calvin A. McDonald, Occasional Paper No. 121 (IMF, Washington, DC, 1995; 43 pages; $15).

Africa's Multilateral Debt: A Modest Proposal by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Overseas Development (Overseas Development Institute, London, UK; 1995; 213 pages; £10.00)

African Women and Development: A History by Margaret C. Snyder and Mary Tadesse (Zed Books, London, UK; 1995; 239 pages, hd £39.95; pb £14.95)

Angola: Arms Trade and Violations of the Laws of War since the 1992 Elections by Alex Vines (Human Rights Watch Arms Project and Human Rights Watch/Africa, New York, NY; 1994; 163 pages $18.00)

Development Management in Africa: Toward Dynamism, Empowerment, and Entrepreneurship eds: Sadig Rasheed and David Fashole Luke (Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado; Oxford, England; 1995; 284 pages $49.95)

Children of Sudan: Slaves, Street Children and Child Soldiers (Human Rights Watch/Africa, New York; 1995; 128 pages; $10).

Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia (Human Rights Watch Children's Rights Project and Human Rights Watch/Africa, New York, NY; 1994; 88 pages; $7.00)

Grassroots Environmental Action: People's Participation in Sustainable Development eds: Dharam Ghai and Jessica M. Vivian (UNRISD and Routledge, New York, NY; 351 pages hb $55.00, pb $18.95)

From WID to GAD: Conceptual Shifts in the Women and Development Discourse by Shahrashoub Razavai and Carol Miller (Beijing Women's Conference; UNRISD; Switzerland; gratis)

The 1945 Manchester Pan-African Congress Revisited by Hakim Adi and Marika Sherwood with **Colonial and...Coloured Unity** ed: George Padmore (New Beacon Books Ltd., London, England; 1995; £9.95)

STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

IMF Programmes in Developing Countries: Design and Impact by Tony Killick (Overseas Development Institute, London, 1995; £11.99).

Adjusted Lives (Stories of Structural Adjustments) by F. Odun Balogun (Africa World Press, Trenton, NJ; 1995; 114 pages; $9.95).

Africa Beyond Adjustment by Nguyuru H.I. Lipumba (Overseas Development Council, Washington, DC; 1994; 102 pages; $9.95).

Financing Health Care in Sub-Saharan Africa through User Fees and Insurance by R. Paul Shaw and Charles C. Griffin (World Bank, Washington, DC; 1995; 100 pages; $6.95).

Moving to the Market: The World Bank in Transition by Richard W. Richardson and Jonas H. Haralz (Overseas Development Council, Washington, DC; 1995; 96 pages; $9.95).

Structural Adjustment and Ethnicity in Nigeria ed.: Eghosa E. Osoghae (Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, Uppsala, Sweden; 1995; 66 pages; £5.95)

Paying for Health: Poverty & Structural Adjustment in Zimbabwe by Jean Lennock (Oxfam , Oxford, UK; 1995; 40 pages; £2.95).

Structural Adjustment and Income Distribution: Issues and Experience by Azizur Rahman Khan (International Labour Organization, Geneva, Switzerland; 1993; 80 pages; 20 Swiss Francs).

Women Pay the Price: Structural Adjustment in Africa and the Caribbean ed. Gloria T. Emeagwali (Africa World Press, Trenton, NJ; 1995; 166 pages; $16.95).

AFRICA IN BRIEF

UNCTAD and WTO agree on closer cooperation

The UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) have agreed to work together to help integrate developing economies and countries in transition into the international trading system. The new UNCTAD Secretary-General, Mr. Rubens Ricupero, told the UN General Assembly on 13 November that his organization and the WTO will "work together and complement each other" in several technical cooperation activities.

Under the new arrangement, Mr. Ricupero and WTO Director-General Renato Ruggiero will co-chair joint meetings every six months, starting in January 1996. The meetings will focus on issues of globalization and liberalization and their impact on developing countries — the themes of UNCTAD IX, to be held in Johannesburg, South Africa, in April. The two organizations also plan to "produce urgently" an action plan for Africa to help focus their "collective efforts."

Mr. Ricupero's comments came in the wake of charges of duplication and calls by the US and some European countries for a restructuring of the mandate and functions of UNCTAD, which was established in 1964 to accelerate trade and economic development, mainly in developing countries. In contrast, the developing countries' Group of 77 and China, as well as the Non-Aligned Movement, have in recent months urged further strengthening of UNCTAD.

UNCTAD provides a universal forum for analysis and discussion of international trade policy from a development perspective, said Mr. Ricupero. It also focuses attention on primary commodities, on which most African economies depend for the bulk of their export revenue.

The role of UNCTAD is all the more important at a time when globalization and liberalization are further marginalizing least developed countries (LDCs) from the world economy, said Mr. Ricupero, noting that since 1990, the number of LDCs increased by almost 20 per cent, from 41 to 48. ■

ECA issues first report on human development in Africa

While progress for African children has been achieved at a speed unparalleled in human history, this fact is often obscured by the magnitude of the task that remains, as well as by recent setbacks and growing challenges facing African countries, says the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) in its first report devoted exclusively to human development on the continent.

The *Human Development in Africa 1995 Report* shows that between 1960 and 1992, 18 African countries reduced child mortality rates by more than 50 per cent and most others by more than one-third. But while 28 African countries more than doubled child immunization rates in the 1980s, the level declined in 30 African countries in 1991-92.

Focusing on three central pillars of human development — child survival and development, health and education — and backed by a comprehensive list of statistics, the report recalls commitments made to develop Africa's human resources, reviews what progress has been attained and identifies problems which have been encountered.

Among its objectives, the report — which will be issued biennially — hopes to build a data base to monitor improvements in the quality of life in Africa and, in view of the enormous human development tasks facing the continent, to galvanize action by policy-makers and development experts. ■

Guinea worm disease could be eradicated soon

A public health landmark — the virtual eradication of Guinea worm disease — will soon be reached, thanks to the efforts of a worldwide coalition including the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Carter Centre. On 4 December, former US President Jimmy Carter announced on behalf of the coalition — which also includes the US Agency for International Development and the Peace Corps — that the fight against Guinea worm has reduced the parasitic infection by 95 per cent. If the momentum continues, the disease will be eliminated in a few years, Mr. Carter said, which will represent "one of the historic achievements in the field of human health."

Guinea worm disease, which was particularly endemic in Africa and Asia, is now down to its last 100,000 cases, from a peak of 3.5 million in the 1980s. Remaining pockets of the disease are confined to a band of 16 African countries and a few areas in India and Yemen. Guinea worm incapacitates its victims, harming agricultural production, school attendance, nutrition and other areas, said UNICEF.

In partnership with the World Bank, WHO announced a new initiative to eventually eradicate another debilitating disease, onchocerciasis, or river blindness, from the remaining 16 African countries which were not covered by the original Onchocerciasis Control Programme. Nearly 100 million Africans are estimated to be at risk from the disease, the second leading infectious cause of blindness. ■

Nigeria faces aid suspension after executions in November

Joining a chorus of international protest over the hangings by the Nigerian government of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other human rights activists, the European Commission (EC) suspended aid to Nigeria on 13 November, including $475 mn through the Lomé Convention and $225 mn from the European Development Fund and the European Investment Bank. UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said he was "shocked and appalled to learn of the execution" of the nine Nigerians, and urged the Nigerian government "to abide by its international obligations and to fully respect the rights of minorities."

According to Mr. João de Deus Pinheiro, the European Union Development Commissioner responsible for policy towards African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries, the European Commission was "outraged" by the execution of the nine activists, who were convicted of involvement in murder. The EC said it would propose further restrictive measures.

On 22 December, the UN General Assembly condemned the "arbitrary execution, after a flawed judicial process, of Ken Saro-Wiwa and his eight co-defendants" in a resolution adopted by a vote of 101 to 14, with 47 abstentions. Nine African countries voted for the resolution, nine voted against, 25 abstained and 10 others were not present.

During earlier debate on the draft resolution in a UN committee on human rights, Nigeria's Permanent Representative Ibrahim Gambari argued that the executions were "in accordance with law." He added that the promotion and

protection of human rights should be carried out without interference in the internal affairs of member states.

Three days before the EC decision to suspend aid, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), the private sector lending arm of the World Bank, announced it was "unable to proceed" with a $100 mn loan to Nigeria to finance part of a $3.6 bn liquefied natural gas (LNG) project. Three other external partners, the Anglo-Dutch Shell company, France's Elf Aquitaine and Italy's Agip, will go ahead with the project. The activists, who campaigned for the rights of the Ogoni minority in the oil-rich Niger River delta, had strongly opposed the LNG project. ■

Task force set up to assist Africa's informal sector

Of the new employment opportunities that will be generated in Africa in the 1990s, 93 per cent will be found in the informal sector, according to the latest data from the International Labour Organization. This finding underscores the need for support and strengthening mechanisms, said participants at the first meeting of a task force on Africa's informal sector held at UN headquarters in late November.

The formation of the 31-member task force, composed of donor and African governments, UN agencies, non-governmental organizations and informal sector practitioners, was one of the principal outcomes of an international workshop on informal sector development in Africa also held in New York in June (see *Africa Recovery*, Vol. 9, No. 2).

The task force met to discuss an outline Special Programme of Action that will serve as a guide for international efforts to support Africa's informal sector. Input into the programme of action will be sought from other interested individuals and organizations before the task force meets again in Conakry, Guinea, in April, where a dialogue with representatives of the informal sector will take place. The adoption and operationalization of the programme of action — which covers such areas as an enabling environment, infrastructure support, credit, appropriate technology and business skills — will be the final stages of the task force's work. ■

Zambia wins support from IMF and bilateral donors

After clearing $1.2 bn in arrears to the International Monetary Fund, Zambia secured a three-year enhanced structural adjustment facility (ESAF) loan of $1.043 bn in December and a $270 mn one-year structural adjustment facility (SAF). In 1987, Zambia was declared ineligible for IMF resources because of its loan arrears. After coming to power in 1991, President Frederick Chiluba's government negotiated a rights-accumulation programme with the IMF which helped clear its arrears.

At a Consultative Group meeting on 14-15 December, donors pledged $300 mn in project and commodity support for 1996, contingent on Zambia keeping up the pace of economic reform. A Paris Club debt reduction meeting is expected early in 1996 at which Zambia will seek Naples terms for debt relief, hoping to cut its $6.4 bn external debt by $1.5 bn. ■

Oxfam Poverty Report tackles adjustment programmes

By ***Masimba Tafirenyika***

By the year 2000, the number of Africans living in poverty will have swelled from the current 218 million to 300 million, according to a recent report by Oxfam, the British non-governmental aid organization. *The Oxfam Poverty Report*, drawn from findings in 70 developing countries, examines the underlying causes of poverty and conflict. It notes that one in four of the world's inhabitants is consigned to poverty, representing a massive waste of human potential.

The Oxfam study cites data from World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports that acknowledge the shortcomings of structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) in trying to revamp African economies. In the case of Ghana, which the Bank has held up for years as an example of a successful SAP, Oxfam notes that the Bank itself says the country will need another two decades at current growth rates before it joins the ranks of middle-income countries, and another 50 years before the average Ghanaian crosses the poverty line.

Oxfam argues that there are no ready-made universal blueprints for successful adjustment. The report calls for more transparent policy formulation of SAPs, a process which is now "opaque and surrounded in secrecy." For example, Zimbabweans had no inkling that their government had agreed to Bretton Woods recommendations to increase user fees for health and education. If they had known, community organizations could have provided information to guide policy decisions, Oxfam argues.

While the World Bank and IMF claim that there are no alternatives to adjustment, Oxfam is convinced that current budget stabilization programmes exacerbate, rather than eradicate, underlying structural problems. Adjustment policies, the report argues, should set targets for budget deficit reduction and interest rates which are compatible with economic recovery and employment creation, and should also emphasize revenue expansion through progressive taxes.

The Bank has argued that the state intervention that underpinned today's economic growth in East Asia would be inconsistent with World Trade Organization obligations. Oxfam maintains that this is a powerful argument for reforming international trade rules and adjustment policies. Its contention that speculative capital flows are destabilizing recovery prospects by causing severe balance of payments instability has been bolstered by a recent IMF study which concludes that some degree of capital markets regulation is necessary.

The report criticizes recent "half-hearted and ill-conceived" measures undertaken to solve the debt crisis. It proposes debt write-offs of between 80 and 100 per cent of the entire debt stock for the severely indebted low-income countries (SILICs); and converting the entire stock of debt owed by SILICs to the IMF into the concessional terms of the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank facility that is the largest multilateral source of soft loans to Africa, with repayments starting after 20 years at nominal interest rates. Oxfam argues that the only way to solve the multilateral debt problem is to authorize the IMF to issue a new tranche of special drawing rights or to sell some gold stocks.

Northern governments could do more to enhance human welfare by creating market opportunities through trade and writing off debt than they could ever achieve through development assistance, the report says. Oxfam concludes with "an agenda for change": an outline of measures designed to usher developing countries into an era of sustainable economic development. ■

AFRICA WATCH

APPOINTMENTS

Foto Lusardo

Mr. Rubens Ricupero *of Brazil has been appointed Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. Mr. Ricupero was Ambassador to Italy, having previously served as Minister of Finance (1994) and Minister of the Environment and Amazonian Affairs (1993-94). He was Ambassador to the United States from 1991 to 1993 and Permanent Representative to the United Nations Office in Geneva from 1987 to 1991.*

Mr. Andronico O. Adede *of Kenya has been appointed Registrar of the International Tribunal for Rwanda by Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali. Mr. Adede is the Deputy Director of the UN's Codification Division in the Office of Legal Affairs and is responsible for issues pertaining to the work of the International Law Commission.*

Major General Philip Valerio Sibanda *of Zimbabwe has been appointed the new Force Commander of the UN Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM III). He replaces Major-General Chris Abutu Garuba of Nigeria.*

Major General Rufus Kupolati *of Nigeria became the new Chief of Staff for the UN Truce Supervision Organization in October. He was the Force Commander of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group in Liberia (ECOMOG) and a member of Nigeria's Armed Forces Ruling Council in1990-93.*

UNITED NATIONS

New UN initiative to spur development in Africa

Every UN body and agency "is placing Africa in the forefront of its priorities" through a System-Wide Special Initiative to be launched soon, declared Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali at the Francophone Summit in Cotonou, Benin, on 2 December.

The Special Initiative, an effort to maximize UN system support for African development, will help implement policies and programmes largely decided upon by African countries themselves and will reinforce peace-building efforts in the region. It will also mobilize donors to reverse Africa's marginalization in the world economy.

It will have two components: specific development actions to be jointly undertaken by UN organizations in collaboration with African governments, and a year-long international campaign of political mobilization, with World Bank participation in a major effort to raise the required multi-billion dollar financing.

After an intensive 10-day tour of Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Benin and Côte d'Ivoire in late November and early December, Mr. Boutros-Ghali told journalists that Africans felt their continent was being marginalized and the international community was paying inadequate attention to their problems.

He made efforts during his trip to assure African leaders, and said that the UN "is stepping up its cooperation with the states and regional institutions of Africa — and in particular the Organization of African Unity... I want every African to feel that he or she is helped and supported by the international community as a whole." ■

AWARDS

Africa Prize goes to Nujoma and Mungherera

Namibian President Sam Nujoma and Ms. Joyce Mungherera, newly elected international Vice President of the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), share this year's Africa Prize for Leadership for the Sustainable End of Hunger. The Hunger Project, which awards the annual $100,000 prize, praised President Nujoma for leading the country to reconciliation, better agricultural performance and increased government spending on health and education. Namibia has raised its health and education budgets to 30 per cent of total spending, one of the highest levels in Africa.

Ms. Mungherera, executive director of Uganda's YWCA for the past 25 years, was commended for her dynamic leadership in building the organization into a powerful national force for literacy, family planning and higher incomes for rural women. It currently has over 1 million members, a staff of 1,000 and is one of the largest non-governmental organizations in Africa. ■

TRADE

Small gain for African exports

The value of Africa's merchandise imports and exports rose in 1994 for the first time since 1990, reported the World Trade Organization (WTO) publication *International Trade: Trends and Statistics*. Merchandise imports rose 3 per cent to $99 bn compared to a 4 per cent fall in 1993. But exports grew by just 2 per cent to $91 bn (and with South Africa excluded, by under 1 per cent) despite the strong economic recovery in Western Europe, which buys more than half of Africa's exports.

The report noted the impact of falling oil prices on oil and gas exporters (Algeria, Angola, Libya and Nigeria) while drought reduced agricultural output in many parts of Africa and increased the need for food imports.

On a positive note, WTO said Benin, Egypt, Guinea-Bissau, Kenya, Mauritius, South Africa, Tunisia and Uganda had all increased exports in the 1990s. However, Africa's share in world exports fell from 2.9 per cent in 1990 to 2.2 per cent in 1994. ■

UNITED NATIONS

US withdraws from UNIDO

Citing "severe budgetary pressures," the US announced on 4 December that as of 31 December 1996, it was withdrawing from the UN Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), set up in 1967 to promote and accelerate the industrialization of developing countries. US Secretary of State Warren Christopher said in a letter to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali that while the US recognized "the good work performed by UNIDO," it had to be selective on how best to use its limited resources.

UNIDO Director-General Mauricio de Maria y Campos expressed regret at the withdrawal of the US funding, worth 25 per cent of UNIDO's $209 mn budget for 1996-97, but said UNIDO "must continue its vital assistance to developing countries to build their industries and achieve a better life for their people." ■